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LILIAS LEE

AND OTHER POEMS

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AND OTHER POEMS

BY

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'THE GABERLUNZIE'S WALLET;' 'THE MILLER OF DEANHAUGH;'
'POEMS, SONGS,' ETC.

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LILIAS LEE

A TALE IN VERSE

ILLUSTRATIVE OF SCOTTISH MANNERS IN THE BEGINNING OF THE 16TH CENTURY

AND

EMBODYING SOME INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF JAMES IV. OF SCOTLAND

INTRODUCTION.

Dazzled by the brilliancy of martial achievements, historians have too frequently passed by in comparative silence those of the philanthropist and philosopher. While their choicest encomiums are lavished on the heroes of the battle-field, a brief notice but too often disposes of the benefactors of the human race. Thus, while the chivalrous deeds of some of our early Scottish monarchs have been held up for admiration, the efforts of others whose energies had been devoted to the improvement of their country in the arts of peace have been insufficiently appreciated.

In the following Poem an attempt has been made to illustrate a few points in the character of James IV., whose untimely fate at Flodden was so long and so deeply deplored by his country. The heroic daring and love of adventure for which that Prince was

remarkable, have been already amply illustrated in the pages of history and romance; but his love of truth, and his anxious efforts to improve the condition of the common people, seem at least as worthy of remembrance.

James was ever the friend and protector of the poor, an impartial administration of justice being at all times his first care. With this view he visited every corner of his dominions, travelling frequently alone at night, and in the most inclement seasons, to great distances; surprising the judge by his sudden appearance upon the tribunal, and striking terror into the hearts of the guilty by the rapidity and certainty of the royal judgment. His son Alexander, Archbishop of St Andrews, often accompanied him in these excursions, and was also efficient in checking the insolence or rapacity of the brotherhood over whom he officiated as Primate. This youth was the favourite pupil of Erasmus. His early career was full of promise, but he was unfortunately slain at Flodden, where he fought and fell by his father's side. It is hoped that the characters of James and his son, as described in the Poem, will be found in strict accordance with historical fact, and that the example they present may not be without effect.

James's well-known attachment to rural pastimes of all kinds suggested the idea of presenting him in the midst of the playful gaiety of a peasant's holiday; and it seems not unlikely that such festivals, some faint resemblances of which may still occasionally be seen, were introduced by this enlightened monarch for the purpose of inducing a more friendly intercourse between the higher and lower classes. In addition to the advantages derived by the agricultural community from the policy of James, he also gave an incentive to native talent by inviting artificers from the Continent; and many of our borough towns, which afterwards became famous for peculiar kinds of manufacture, owe their origin to his fostering care. Inheriting from his father a love of literature and the fine arts, he rivalled his father-in-law in encouraging commerce, manufactures, and agriculture; and if England rose to unprecedented prosperity under the sagacious Henry VII., Scotland kept equal pace in the march of improvement under the gallant James IV.

LILIAS LEE.

CANTO I.

The morning light streams o'er the mountain-tops,
Melting the darkness into liquid blue,
While o'er the valleys and the hillside slopes
Rises in silver sheen the fragrant dew;
The sunlit ocean, gleaming, meets the view;
Long wreaths of roseate clouds are floating seen;
Rock, tower, and spire reflect each orient hue;
Trees, fields, and flowers, glisten in deepest green,
And Heaven and Earth are blent in harmony serene.

Where the old bridge spans the romantic stream,
And the mill-wheel laps up the crystal tide,
Where the grey crags the wooded banks inseam,
And the church-spire towers in its Gothic pride,
There is a village by that water-side,

Stretching in rows of thatch-roofed cots along,
Where still repose seems ever to abide,
Save on this morn, when, by the bells' ding-dong,
The inmates, roused to joy, bustle in merry throng.

And why?—this is the Peasant's holiday,
The village maiden's yearly festival,
When love holds high and undivided sway,
And lustrous eyes keep manly hearts in thrall.
Peep through that lattice, o'er that woodbine wall,
What plaiting, curling, lacing, twining there!
Damsels preparing for the festive ball,
Timid, and starting at each breath of air.
But go! rash man, 'tis death to gaze on charms so fair.

The blushing morning with her rosy smile
Hath roused the ploughman from a sleepless night,
In haste to have the partner of his toil
With favours, flowers, and ribbons all bedight;
His comely sisters, with their bosoms light,
Are twining wreaths, or plaiting graceful ties,
While he, made merry by the colours bright
Mingling harmonious like the rainbow dyes,
Swears his good beast shall be the wonder of all eyes.

This day the old man wears his wedding-coat,
His helpmate deems him comely as of yore;
On each fire-crook is slung the big kail-pot,
And every cottar hath his best in store
For friends who come far o'er the weary moor,
With hospitable kin to spend the day;
And stalls are ranged thick round the hostel door,
That help the hard-won half-year's fee away,—
For belles delight to buy, and beaus delight to pay.

But hark! the blaring trumps and rattling drums!
And see approach the joyous cavalcade;
Adown the lane the mounted muster comes
Of Scotland's sons in health's rich bloom arrayed:
Let not vain folly mock their gay parade,
Nor envy seek their joyous mirth to mar;
Of such stern sinew were those heroes made
Who spread the fame of Scotland wide and far,
And made her great in peace, and terrible in war.

What strings of flowing ribbons meet the eye,
Floating and dangling in the breezy air!
While, with a banner waving wide and high,
Is one who deems himself beyond compare,
And so believes that maiden blooming fair,

Who wears a love-knot in her gentle breast:
Ah! modest, loving, virtuous hearts are there,
Throbbing and bounding, longing to be blest
With one fond chaste embrace, when all the world's
at rest.

They reach the centre of the little town,
A busy place on this eventful day,
And from their steeds the heroes light them down,
Ready to mingle in the merry fray,
Their bonnets blue, their coats of hodden grey,
Their rows of crystal buttons sparkling clear,
Bright scarlet vests, complete their fine array—
Too fine, too gay, each maid is apt to fear,
Lest brighter eyes may covet him she holds so dear.

The smooth grass-plot behind the village inn
Is covered o'er with striped marquee and tent,
From whence ascend loud shouts of joyous din,
The noisy glee of rustic merriment;
All hands are clasped, all hearts in love are blent,
While sentiment and pledge go round and round,
And friendly feelings, for a year close pent,
Now swelling from each bosom's deep profound,
Gush out in genial streams, o'erleaping bar and bound.

But hark! the shrill notes of a hunting-horn
Have roused the merry revellers to their feet,
And forth they rush, on joyful pinions borne,
Stout Baron Home, their feudal lord, to meet,
Who with kind smiles his tenants comes to greet;
And in his train are knights and ladies gay,
Mounted on chafing steeds and palfreys fleet—
For well the Baron loves the holiday,
When peasant, lord, and knight mingle in rustic play.

"Neighbours," he said, "the youthful heir of Home
This day of age, we give a festival
In honour of the house. We pray you come,
And on the lawn that skirts our castle wall
The hammer throw, or drive the bounding ball—
Such sports will grace our lordly tournament;
Without distinction let us mingle all,
And high and low on manly games be bent,"—
They follow with a shout that cleaves the firmament.

Upon a verdant, widely-spreading lawn,
Surrounded by long rows of stately trees,
The eager groups together now are drawn
To witness skill and valour gain their fees;
Pennons and banners flutter in the breeze.

Hauberk and helmet glisten in the sun ;
Eager for fame are men of all degrees,
Who, flushed and flurried, jostling onward run
To mingle in the fray, thus joyously begun.

Above the crowds a platform towers on high,
O'erarched with canopy of cloth-of-gold,
Where beauteous damsels fix each wandering eye,
And make each manly heart leap high and bold :
Such matchless flowers spring from no common mould—
Patrician blood flows pure through every vein ;
Such heavenly gleams the morning skies unfold,
When the broad sun lights up the blushing main,
And startled darkness flies far o'er the dusky plain.

'Twas in the reign of Scotland's James the Fourth,—
A prince still dear to every Scottish heart,
Who made these sterile regions of the north
The home of science and the nurse of art ;
Who in all feuds took aye the poor man's part,
And taught strong labour how to raise his brow,
Urging the nation on a course to start
Which o'er bleak moors impelled the ridging plough,
Till plenty filled the land and loaded every bough.

Brave Baron Home loves well his gallant King,
And loves with patriot zeal his fatherland,
Shelt'ring the poor beneath his ample wing,
Dispensing favours with a bounteous hand;
And thus this day all under his command
Have each their favourite pastime, sport, and play,
While the bold Baron, with a knightly band,
Prepares in manly sport to lead the way—
The herald's trumpet sounds, and knights rush to the fray.

Onward they rush, and shivered lance and spear
In splinters leap high up into the air;
Another shock, and in his pond'rous gear
Down rolls a knight all bruised, the trumpets blare.
'Mid shouts the victor's brow with garlands rare
Is decked by Home's fair daughter Madeline—
For gift from her what would not mortal dare?
The fairest wreath her taper hands could twine,
Proud victor of the joust, such noble prize is thine.

And who the winner of this glorious prize?
A slender youth, with locks of glossy brown—
A boy more like to please a lady's eyes
Than win and wear a victor's laurelled crown.
Swift from his saddle leaps the stripling down,

To raise from earth his rival lying low,
Who, like a rude and thankless vulgar clown,
Refuses aid from one he deems his foe,
And mutters, "Time may come thou shalt have blow
for blow!"

The lists are cleared, and all the lengthened space
Is filled with archers in their suits of green,—
At twelve score paces distant is their place;
They bend their sturdy bows, their shafts so keen,
Swift as the light, fly through the space between;
The target's heart is pierced by master art,
And shouts are heard, and eager eyes are seen;
The victor of the joust hath shot that dart
Which gains the silver arrow, dear to archer's heart.

Yet hold, another shaft now onward flies,
Aimed by a humbler but as sure a hand;
Again the applauding shouts spontaneous rise,
The rival bolts together quiv'ring stand.
The judges are at fault. By Home's command,
The eager archers aim their shafts again:
The prize is won; a slender hazel wand
Is cleft in twain by the victorious swain,
And loud his praise is rung o'er all the happy plain.

The peasants now for rustic games prepare,
Maidens and matrons cluster round in rings,
Till, fired by honest love and beauty rare,
Elate each champion feels. Stout Vulcan swings,
And with full sweep a huge sledge-hammer flings;
Sudden and quick it leaves his horny hand,
And flies through space as if 'twere borne on wings,
Sinking deep buried in the wounded land—
Who shall attempt such feat? who can such strength command?

The burly ploughman bares his brawny arm,
Around his head the pond'rous iron wheels;
With nervous grasp, and pulse round rolling warm,
He heaves the hammer, and exhausted reels.
No marvel that strong Vulcan angry feels—
The point he reached is passed a yard and more;
And now, amid loud shouts and merry peals,
The vanquished cyclop, sanguine as before,
Stands forth again, his tarnished glory to restore.

Lo! swelling like a Hercules he stands,
Tendon and muscle quivering trebly strong;
Again the hammer leaves his sinewy hands,
And like a bird skims steadily along.
A point is gained, his comrades round him throng,

And on their shoulders raise their champion stout;
They boast him matchless, but they may be wrong;
For see, the victor of the jousting bout,
Resolved to try a throw, steps lightly, laughing, out.

The youth now swings the hammer to and fro,
Half-circling, by degrees it leaves the ground;
Away it speeds beyond stout Vulcan's throw,
Loud murmurs of applause pass round and round.
When lo! the victor-archer with a bound
Makes the large hammer wing the air again,
And now still louder shouts and cheers resound—
This throw hath distanced all, and o'er the plain
Is heard the praises of the still-victorious swain.

A brave knight now, in archer's dress bedight,
Leaps from the platform down upon the green;
His glancing eye gleams like the morning light,
Sparkling reflected 'mid the dewy sheen
Of crystalled flowers: majestic is his mien,
Stately his step, his bearing bold and high;
And while the silken scarfs are waving seen,
And Madeline looks down with beaming eye,
He bows, and seems a god just lighted from the sky.

He casts a merry glance on all around—
On all that glance its genial fire hath shed;
Then stepping lightly o'er the gowaned ground,
He lifts the hammer from its lowly bed:
One hand is all he deigns, while o'er his head
He balances the shaft with easy play,
And now, with all his vigour onward sped,
Far, far beyond all else it wings its way,
And the brave knight is hailed the victor of the day.

Now stepping forth to urge the bounding ball,
Brimful of mirth and wild with thoughtless glee,
Are village artisans, who stake their all
With muirland herds, who wage their yearly fee.
Round goes the ball, eager the rivals flee,
The aim of each to bring his neighbour down;
Nimble as thought, they panting run, and see—
With one sly step the tailor of the town
Trips up and lays on earth a huge ungainly clown.

Eager they push and run, and run and kick;
The ball, meanwhile, keeps ever on the wing;
Woe to the skull that is not trebly thick,
Woe to the wight who lies low floundering.
Yet up the prostrate scramble, for the sting

Of vile defeat is worse than death to bear,
And crippled limbs raised up with supple swing,
New-strung with shame and strengthened by despair,
Now send the ball aloft to spin in middle air.

Blows are inflicted, limbs are all but broke,
And cripples leave in angry mood the game;
Yet still the ball obeys another stroke,
Still struggling rivals fierce contend for fame.
Those swelling frames seem filled with souls of flame—
'Tis love, sweet love, that feeds the gen'rous fire,
For see, each champion eyes his blooming dame,
Whose looks anew his energies inspire,
And still he strives anew to win the golden hire.

The victor-archer now contests at last
The game with him who conquered at the joust,—
Those twain who seem together always cast,
The one so slim, the other so robust;
They spurn the ground, they run, they close, they twist
Their manly figures in all sorts of ties;
At length a fierce and all too powerful thrust
Prostrates the jouster, motionless who lies,
And loud on every side the archer's praises rise.

In motley groups the rustics next appear,
Each wielding *shinties* like themselves in make;
Tall men clutch long straight cudgels, short men bear
Short crook-kneed rungs cut from the thorny brake,—
Each feels the honour of his name at stake.
Down go the balls, the *shinties* strike pell-mell,
Such knops and strokes the players give and take;
Shins, knees, and wrists, smarting with anguish fell,
Wish they had trumpet-tongues their sufferings dire
to tell.

Away the whipped ball bounds. The players fall
In clumps together, reeling to the ground:
Jostling they tumble o'er the rolling ball,—
Fat men lie still, lean men spin round and round:
The hollow earth, struck with a loud rebound,
Sends back each stroke in echo from her breast.
Again, again is heard the joyous sound,
Again the former victor is confessed
'Mong all his neighbour swains the boldest and the best.

Both prince and peasant feel the potent power,
The might and majesty of sovereign love,—
Of love that lights life's path when dark clouds lower,
And raises earth-born souls to heaven above.
For what but love could make the peasant prove

In skill superior to his bold compeers?
When round the heart bright beauty's chains are wove,
The soul aspiring spurns all childish fears,
And daring valour high his manly head uprears.

Why flies the victor back from the array
Of ladies fair who circle beauty's queen?
Say, why retires the hero of the day
From where the victor's wreath of bays is seen?
Upon a velvet mound of glossy green,
Surrounded by a host of rustic beaus,
A maiden stands, of graceful form and mien;
The victor kneels, and both their looks disclose
How proud his fond heart beats, how warm her bosom glows.

CANTO II.

Nature is bountiful alike to all,
The limits marked by man she owns them not;
And beauty, while it lights the Baron's hall,
Shines all as brightly in the peasant's cot:
There labour feels contented with his lot,
There truth and love, the heaven-born twins, are reared;
There vows are murmured ne'er to be forgot,
And there, by every sacred tie endeared,
Are fond confiding hearts in constancy unpeered.

And Lilias Lee is fair, though lowly born—
Fair as the Queen of Beauty, Madeline;
Her rosy blush may shame the rosy morn
To paleness, and the stars may cease to shine,
Such brilliant lustre hath her eyes divine,

Like loadstars twinkling 'neath their dark fringed
covers,
That round men's souls their glances so entwine;—
In sooth, it is no marvel that there hovers
Around so sweet a maid so fond a group of lovers.

But though admiring lovers circle round,
Fair Lilias Lee is pledged to Randal Rae;
Their fathers are old neighbours, on Home's ground
Two moorland farms they hold for little pay,
And from the early dawn of life's young day
The children had together lived and loved;
And now sweet Lilias, fair as flowery May,
Feels her true heart with thrilling transport moved,
That her own Randal hath so well his manhood proved.

Fair Lilias blushes crimson when a knight,
He who had distanced all at hammer-throwing,
Comes forth with graceful step and eyes all bright,
And while the lovers' cheeks are flushed and glowing,
Looking at both with leer so arch and knowing,
And loosing from his neck a golden chain,
He slips it o'er their heads, thus aptly showing
How meet it is to link in one the twain
Who gained the eyes and hearts of all upon the plain!

"Wear this," he said, "brave youth, you've nobly won,
And merit well a richer, better prize;
Keep onward in the course so well begun,
Your bright reward in this fair damsel's eyes:
Though humble be your rank, your soul must rise
Inspired, exalted with so rare a treasure;
God keep you both in love's sweet paradise,
Blest in your mutual love beyond all measure,—
Blest with contentment, peace, and every social pleasure."

This said, the Knight steps back. The trumpet's blast
Invites the strangers to the Baron's hall,
The rustics to the lawn, where a repast,
Substantial, large, is spread to serve them all.
And hark! the bagpipe summons to the ball—
A summons all with right goodwill obey;
Ladies and knights hold for the festival,
And on their prancing palfreys lead the way,
While lads and lasses follow, romping blythe and gay!

Here comes the knight whose praise the lovers won,
The hero of the jousting-bout is there;
And like are they, as father is to son,
Majestic in their mien, and in their air:
How comes proud Home and his unseemly heir

To give them precedence? while side by side
With Madeline, the Baron's daughter fair,
The two stout knights together stately ride,
All princely in their bearings, kingly in their pride!

'Tis Scotland's Monarch and his princely boy,
Archbishop of Saint Andrew's Holy See;
Disguised are they, more freely to enjoy
The jocund festival. Brimful of glee,
They lay aside all thought of high degree,
And laughing, bandy merry joke and jest;
But Home's rude heir hath in his memory
The youthful Prince's jousting-bout imprest,
And black revenge now rages through his churlish breast.

The sun in all his glory shines on high,
No marring spot upon his glowing face;
The clouds like tiny shallops floating lie,
Wafted by zephyrs through the deep blue space;
Trees tower aloft in their majestic grace,
Shaketh her ample sides the laughing Earth,
Leaflet and flower expand and interlace:
And now a loud re-echoing shout bursts forth!
The Castle lawn is graced with beauty, love, and mirth.

Their antic tricks and agile feats to show,
A band of strolling mummers now draw nigh ;
Rare leaps they take, rare summersaults they throw,
And one mute dwarf seems like a bird to fly ;
His joyous gambols please each gazer's eye.
The Monarch, tickled with the urchin's sport,
Thus whispers a retainer standing by—
"Command the boy to hie him straight to court ;
The merry knave will make our winter nights seem short."

The messenger conveys the King's command ;
The master mummer, proudly swaggering,
By gestures gives the mute to understand
The honour destined for him by the King :
The dwarf skips round in many a devious swing,
Then kneels him meekly at the Monarch's feet,
The proffered hand is kissed, and with a spring
He clears the crowd for Holyrood. We'll meet
The poor dumb dwarf again ere we our tale complete.

Along the lawn in front of Home's stout castle
Are tables laden with substantial fare,
And seats for which the peasants stoutly wrestle,
That maidens have free choice and ample share :
At length are seated all, and the pure air

With bracing power hath made their stomachs keen;
And there are tempting dainties rich and rare,
And Home's own servitors are bustling seen,
Huge flagons of home-brewed bearing across the green.

Each happy peasant rests and clears his brow;
Each fills a bumper high, and gulps it down;
No quarrel 'twixt opposing heroes now—
The talking tailor apes the silent clown;
Their hearts are bent on feasting, not renown.
They praise the giver, and the feast they prize,
And who may match the vintner of the town?
Look at his jolly cheeks and twinkling eyes,
While, like a bellowing ox, full-throated thus he cries!

"Neighbours and friends, this is a happy day!
A day to be long cherished in our hearts;
Engaged in manly games and sportive play,
Victor and vanquished all have played their parts;
While our good Baron prizes our deserts,
And kindly spreads this glorious feast before us.
Then shout, till Echo from her slumber starts,
And blends her notes amid the swelling chorus,
Hurrah for Baron Home! hurrah! long rule he o'er us!"

The portly vintner drains his tankard dry,
The air again with joyous shouts is rent;
The inmates of the Castle join the cry,
Light scarfs are waved from tower and battlement;
In happy union rich and poor are blent,
Their hearts all bounding, and their souls all glee;
The impatient pipers give their drones full vent,
And off in haste the rustic lovers flee,
Each with his maid to join the dance upon the lea!

Now all admire the pliancy and power
Of the strong ploughman, as he leaps on high;
Untired he reels, and dances by the hour—
He feels the influence of a dark-blue eye;
While ever and anon a smothered sigh
Reveals the hidden passion of his breast;
The love which he, so modest and so shy,
Hath never to his charmer yet confessed;
She gazes fondly on, is he not loved and blest?

Each happy pair now mingles in the dance,
With buoyant spirit and elastic frame;
No mincing airs are here from sunny France,
Each ancient lilt is hailed with loud acclaim:
Behold yon youth whose eyes flash stars of flame,

And see! yon maiden's cheeks with crimson flushing—
That glance hath sent a stream of virgin shame
Throughout her heaving, loving bosom gushing:
She's thine, fond youth, she's thine, all panting, glowing, blushing.

List how Love's honeyed tongue, so bland and sweet,
In low soft murmurs round the circle steals!
See how the pliant limbs and nimble feet
Harmonious mingle in the homely reels!
And oh! what boundless bliss yon rustic feels,
Whose arm is round the maiden of his heart,
When bursting bodice one small glimpse reveals
Of her fair breast, on which, with timid start,
And blushing at herself, she breaks away apart!

And here are Lilias Lee and Randal Rae!
Sure nature never formed so meet a pair;
They lead the dance, all buoyant, light, and gay—
Randal all manly, Lilias more than fair.
The Castle guests come forth to taste the air,
Leaving the wine-cup and the pent-up hall:
Behold the King and Baron Home are there,
Delighted gazing on the peasants' ball,
And inwardly invoking blessings on them all.

Wine opens all the portals of the soul,
And lays the open heart more open still;
It makes the gen'rous spirit spurn control,
And love, fond love, flows through each throbbing rill;
But, ah! such good is overborne by ill,
When, warmed by wine, the coward waxes bold;
And cravens, whom one honest frown can chill,
Their wanton wishes openly unfold,
When from their icy breast wine drives the freezing cold.

So, while Home's wine unlocks each gen'rous heart,
And knits together bosoms fond and true,
Young Home steps forth to play a villain's part,
And perpetrate a crime of darkest hue:
Fair Lilias Lee meets his unhallowed view,
As through the dance she and her lover swim;
And low the craven bows, the maid to sue—
She must consent to tread a step with him;
And Randal yields her hand, to please the lordling's whim.

The dance is o'er, Home whispers Lilias' ear,
And Lilias shrinks affrighted from his gaze;
But her own Randal, who remains still near,
Is there, her faithful heart to cheer and raise;—
Why trembles Home, why flash these eyes of Rae's?

Why leads he Lilias to her father's arms?
Fly! craven Home, a gallant heart's ablaze,
Whose valour, lighted by a maiden's charms,
Shall cause thee soon to feel a base poltroon's alarms!

Outrage and shame were not for Randal Rae;
He held a maxim, then but little known,
That though 'tis meet the poor the rich obey,
The poor may not be tamely trampled on;
And had the Monarch of the Scottish throne
Breathed one rude word to Randal's Lilias Lee,
All loyalty had from his bosom flown,
And 'stead of subject bent on loyal knee,
The King in him a bold and stalwart foe might see!

A maiden's eye is like illumined book,
Where you may read her thoughts all sparkling clear;
And oh! what language in her startled look,
When aught immodest meets a modest ear:
Randal needs not from Lilias' lips to hear
The tenor of young Home's licentious speech;
He sees the craven glide away in fear,
Yon throng of knights and ladies fain to reach,
Who leave the Castle lawn and seek the distant beach.

Along that sunny beach in groups they glide,
Damsel and knight, a gay and gallant train ;
To catch the fresh breeze from the evening tide,
And gaze upon that sun-reflected chain
Of glory, checkering all the wimpling main ;
To mark the stars, whose pure and silver light
Now pales the gold-fringed cloudlets as they wane,
When sober eve makes way for silent night,
And earth-born spirits rise to muse on realms more bright.

Ah ! gallant knights and modest maids are there,
Who all can gaze upon the lovely scene
With raptured eyes,—for all without is fair
When all within is tranquil and serene ;
But earth, e'en though arrayed in richest green,
Seems seared and blighted to the guilty eye :
In vain young Home essays his fears to screen,
His coward spirit hears a boding cry—
" Beware ! beware ! a tempest gathers in the sky ! "

CANTO III.

Why should an inky tempest black the sky,
When July woos the willing earth, sunbrowed?
When floating clouds like dreaming lovers lie
Cradled in bliss, while warbling skylarks crowd
Around them like love's minstrels, piping loud
In ecstacy of joy their heavenly lays,
What pity 'tis for yonder murky cloud
To burst forth from that little speck of haze,
As if from nature's face all beauty to erase.

The journey of the sultry summer-day
Hath passed in brightness. It is eventide;
The sun still shines with feeble parting ray,
As if resolved not e'en that ray to hide
Which might delight the earth, his loving bride:

When all at once high heaven is overspread
With huge grey shadows, flitting far and wide;
Red lightnings flash, loud thunders roll o'erhead,
While, robed in black, the sky seems mourning nature dead.

Athwart the sackcloth-shrouded face of heaven,
In blazing tracts the vivid lightnings gleam;
The drenching rain, in torrents downward driven,
Comes pouring thick in one unbroken stream.
Alarmed, the fainting maidens wildly scream;
Their lovers seize them in their arms and fly,
And boldly realise their last night's dream
By kissing lips all colourless that lie,
Till eyelids gently ope, and bosoms fondly sigh.

Was ever such unlucky thunder-storm?—
Was ever such a pelting thunder-shower?
In vain all fly; in vain each slender form
Seeks shelter in the wood or leafy bower.
Drenched boughs are drooping; beast and bird and flower
Are creeping, shrinking from the angry blast.
Still the loud thunders roll, the dark clouds lower,
And who can tell how long the storm may last?
Patience may fail, the tempest will not hurry past.

Ye who have hearts that own the sway of pity,
When sadd'ning sight falls on your streaming eye,
How must you feel to see these maids so pretty
With little pattering feet all breathless fly ;
The trim neat dresses they've so toiled to buy
Drenched through and through, wet to the very core !
No marvel that they fret, and sob, and cry—
No marvel that their little hearts are sore ;
No marvel that they vow they'll go to ball no more.

Were it not somewhat cruel to begin
On such distressing themes to moralise,
I am so tempted, I'd commit the sin,
Trusting for mercy to those sparkling eyes.
These maids in truth the tempest dearly prize,
And care not if the blast roars howling on ;
Around them love hath closer drawn his ties,
'Mid the dark tumult love from hope hath grown—
They feel their lovers' hearts beat warm against their own.

And is't not thus we learn to know ourselves ?
When any storm in life or nature's sent,
We feel at once, poor timid trembling elves,
How strong we grow when close in friendship blent.
Ah ! read, read on ; your time is all well spent,

If from the changes in one little hour
Ye learn that thus to give kind feeling vent,
Into each other's breasts your thoughts to pour,
Will make love shine more bright when clouds of darkness lower.

Yet there be souls that tempests make more black,
And craven guilt with darkness ever dwells;
The guilty coward shrinks appalled aback,
When the true heart in honest anger swells.
And in Home's Castle, where the high-born belles
Grace with their beauty ball and banquet-hall,
A quivering lip of inward tremor tells
When Randal Rae stalks in with bearing tall,
And challenges young Home 'mid knights and ladies all.

What screams of terror 'mongst the high-born dames!
What darkness in the knights' grim frowning faces!
Stern brows are scowling, eyes are flashing flames—
"What means this rude untutored clown's menaces?
Dreams he because he struts with proud grimaces
Amid his fellow-boors, he'll swagger here?
Peasant, begone! this banquet-hall no place is
Where thy bravado speech will find an ear.
Begone, rude clown, and learn thy betters more to fear!"

"Fear is unknown," returns the gallant youth,
"Save to the guilty mind. The brave man's soul,
All-potent in the strength of virtuous truth,
Brooks not that wealth should have undue control.
And why should ladies cry and brave knights scowl,
And talk of noble rank and ancient race,
When thus a craven loon, with purpose foul,
Hath raised a blush upon a virgin's face,
Whose truth and beauty might the proudest station grace?"

"Hold!" cried young Home, "I fight not such as thee,
The mean descendant of a base-born churl:
If thy fair maiden kindly looks on me,
Am I to check the humour of the girl
For thee?"—and here he gave his locks a twirl.
"Be thankful, knave, thou art beneath my wrath,
Or on thy head dire vengeance would I hurl.
Begone! I prythee seek the nighest path,
And carry thy sweet wench my warmest love i' faith."

Insult on insult—injury on wrong—
The poor man meets oft when he seeks redress:
What matters it though conscious worth be strong,
If wedded to external feebleness?
The poor man's wrongs must seek the deep recess

Of his own breast, in secret there to lie,
Till in soft showers the balm of gentleness
Drops on his wounded spirit from on high,
And cherishes hope's flowers to blossom in the sky.

The ladies praise young Home's forbearance now;
How easy he might strike the peasant down!
What though young Randal wears a manly brow,
And has a noble bearing? he's a clown
Who, having gained the prize, hath surly grown.
But now outsteps the knight, so young and fair,
Who'd striven with Randal for the victor's crown—
"Since no poor man may meet with Home's proud heir,
The poor man's champion I,—that heir to combat dare."

This knight's bold challenge may not be gainsaid:
More close the dames to their protectors cling.
"I," said the champion, "saw the virtuous maid
Insulted grossly by this worthless thing.
The youth is brave, my gauntlet thus I fling—
Home, take it up, my blood is bright as thine:
Though barred my shield, the bastard of a king
Is equal to the purest of thy line,
And thou hast wronged this maid whose quarrel now is mine."

Steps forth the King, steps forth the Baron Home,
In high excitement with the stirring sight:
Both call aloud, "Come, gallant youngsters, come—
Take to your weapons, and in manly fight
Prove us forthwith your mettle and your might.
Scotland may need you both soon in the field—
Cross swords and to't: let's see who hath the right.
Strike bravely out, let neither tamely yield;
If honour be your watchword, glory is your shield."

And now, behold, the young knights chafing stand,
Eager for fight and burning for renown:
Each grasps his sword-hilt with a strong-clenched hand,
Each brow is darkened with a deadly frown;
Their clashing weapons other noises drown.
Sharp are their thrusts, and keen their watchful eyes,
Till, lo! the prince hath struck the craven down,
And loud the bleeding wretch for mercy cries,
While screams and fainting shrieks in wild confusion rise.

Mercy and life are granted ere they're asked,—
The gen'rous victor o'er the conquered bends;
The wound is slight, the Monarch's leech-craft's tasked,
And cheerfully his healing help he lends.
Around the wounded Home flock all his friends;

Revenge is muttered, Randal bears the blame ;
The guests disperse, the festive ball now ends,
But young Home's breast is blazing with a flame
Of lust, revenge, and hate—of humbled pride and shame.

Ah, who may see the gallant Randal Rae
Grasp his brave champion's kindly proffered hand,
Vowing if e'er in bloody field or fray
He needs the help of one good Scottish brand,
To aid the cause of King or fatherland,
How eager he his gratitude to show—
How readily obey the high command
Of one who, great himself, had struck a blow
That raises virtue up and lays oppression low.

Alas, poor Randal ! thou art doomed to bear
A load of injury, a world of wrong !
The Baron Home, incited by his heir,
Ejects thy sire from farm he'd tilled so long.
And thou hast disappeared amid the throng
Of gallant knights. Where hast thou wandered?—where
Shall thy loved Lilias seek thee? shall she long
Her absent lover mourn in deep despair,
Or shall she fall a prey in Home's deceitful snare?

It is a touching sight to see old Rae
Leaving the land where he and his forebears
Had toiled in peace, or bled in battle-fray,
Under their feudal lords, some hundred years.
Now neighbours follow him with prayers and tears,
And wander with him on his weary way;
Why to those tearful prayers shuts Home his ears?
Why sends he forth his servant old and grey,
In some far-distant cot to close his far-spent day?

Excess of love, like light, will make us blind;
The child's worst faults the parent will not see:
And thus old Home, erewhile so frank and kind,
Slave to his son, is now no longer free.
Young Home holds high dominion; Lilias Lee,
Poor mateless bird, with snares encompassed round,
O may high Heaven protect and succour thee!
For now the craven hath a minion found
Who aims thy love to sap, thy spotless heart to wound.

And all from earliest morn to latest even,
And through the night, does Lilias moan and sigh,
And press her throbbing heart, and pray to Heaven
For help in this her sad extremity,
Till burning tears flow from her surcharged eye;

And then—for still such thoughts will interfere
With maiden's musings—she will wonder why
No tidings come from Randal, ever dear;
And now a doubt will rise—were all his vows sincere?

Then worthy Friar John, a holy sage,
Her father's friend, to Lilias passing kind,
Is one who hath the wholesome skill of age
With strict apparent honesty combined,
And he perceives the state of Lilias' mind,
And with her still affects to sympathise:
"Why thus, my daughter, do I ever find
Thee shedding tears, or hearing woeful sighs
For one who hath no heart thy rare deserts to prize?"

Then the sly monk will tell with glowing zeal
How nature gives her gifts to all so free;
How mighty monarchs have been known to kneel,
And beg for love from maids of low degree;
How many ladies not so fair as she
The highest circles in the nation graced:
If Randal Rae forgets fair Lilias Lee,
Why should fair Lilias weep herself to waste,
When Randal might so soon with better be replaced?

Then would the monk speak kindly of young Home,
And as old Lee would list with eager ears,
He'd hint how Lee's descendants yet might come
To heir their Lord's broad lands in after years:
And now fair Lilias' eyes would flow with tears,
And then the monk would laugh these tears away,
And gently bid her hush all foolish fears—
He but essayed to make her feel more gay,
But garrulous old men, why heed what they may say?

Yet Lilias marvels much why not one word,
No token, message, letter's ever sent
From him who is her plighted mate and lord—
From him on whom her every thought is bent.
Can he be dead, or in some dungeon pent?
Tho' urged by danger suddenly to fly,
To leave her thus could ne'er be his intent:
His love was fervent, and his honour high—
Her Ranald must be dead;—would that she too could die!

And Lilias wanders 'mid the bleating ewes,
Or to the little babbling spring is bound,
And some small bird will chirm amid the boughs,
And she will startle at the touching sound,
And set her pitcher down, and turn her round,

In vain expecting Randal's form to see :·
Alas ! old feelings deeper make the wound ;
That same small bird upon that trysting-tree
Hath warbled o'er their vows, and now chirms drearily.

And Lilias wanders by the water-side,
Where she and he were wont to seek the shade,
Listing the gentle murmur of the tide,
Which, flowing like their thoughts, soft music made ;
And there she'll linger till the sunbeams fade,
When daylight bids the mountain-tops farewell ;
And as the maiden wanders through the glade,
She sighs and sobs, as if she fain would tell
Her grief to nature's ear alone in forest dell.

CANTO IV.

'Tis autumn now, and the broad harvest moon
Deep floods the golden fields with mellow light,
And sober eve seems changed to sunny noon,
While day usurps the place of dusky night.
The silver stream rolls on all sparkling bright;
Long strings of pearl hang on the russet boughs;
The deepest dells are open to the sight,
And lovers wander far to plight their vows,
Unheard, but not unseen, among the broomy knowes.

The reaper band who through that autumn day
Have laboured in the field, now seek repose,
And gentle Lilias wends her lonely way,
To brood in gloomy silence o'er her woes.
Deep in the dell, close by the stream she goes—

She threads the winding path without a fear:
How should so pure a woman think of foes!
How could she ever dream of danger near,
Or that amid such light, dark guilt should dare
appear!

And as she reaches now the babbling spring,
And seats herself beneath the trysting-thorn,
She lists, and half expects some bird should sing,
To soothe her heart so heavy and forlorn.
"Ah me," she sighed, "can Randal be forsworn,
Or dead? and shall I never see him more?
And will he never, never more return?—
No never, never!—Lilias marvelled sore,
The echo seemed to rise from nature's inmost core.

And as she stoops down to the limpid spring,
To pluck a leaflet from its flowery brim,
Lo! mark a little bird with fluttering wing
Dart from the boughs, and o'er the water skim,
All startled and alarmed. The light grows dim,
And Lilias' heart beats wildly in her breast.
O'ercome by fears and bodings dark and grim,
She sinks!—an arm around her form is prest:
She starts, she screams, and lo! the craven Home's
confessed.

"Hush, hush, sweet maiden—why that startled cry?
Thus let me clasp thee in my eager arms.
From love like mine, why, dearest, wouldst thou fly?
Vain are thy fears, and groundless thy alarms.
With fond desire this amorous bosom warms,
Thy blushing beauties fan my soul to flame:
Then to my wishes, maiden, yield thy charms,—
My wooing's rough, my love must bear the blame;
We are alone, and night shall veil thy maiden shame."

Fair Lilias backward shrunk in startled fear,
The wanton speech made her still more afraid:
Her heart beat wild;—again young Home drew near—
She clasped her hands, invoking Heaven for aid;
Then starting back—"For shame, young lord,"
she said,
"By force, and force alone, thou'lt gain thine aim:
And why shouldst thou thy station so degrade
As bring a blot upon a maiden's fame,
Who still can boast an honest though a humble name?"

"Maiden," said Home, "I honour thoughts like thine;
Yet, ah! where is the danger thou need'st fear
From a true worshipper at beauty's shrine?
Then, lovely Lilias, lend me now thine ear;
Listen to one to whom thou art too dear—

To one who long hath prayed the powers above
For such an hour as this, when, no one near,
He might reveal to thee his cherished love,
And make one bold essay thy virgin heart to move.

"My noble sire will never give consent
That I should woo and win thee as my bride:
Himself of ancient blood and high descent,
To some proud highborn dame he'd have me tied.
But why should love be sacrificed to pride?
Better with life itself than love to part.
What reck I now when thou art by my side?—
Then give me love for love, sweet heart for heart;
Nature shall be our priest—we'll scorn all monkish art."

"Dare not, my son, the deed on which thou'rt bent,"
A voice exclaimed, in deep and solemn tone,
"Unless it be thine honest true intent
To win this maid and wear her as thine own:
In name of holy Church I say begone,
Nor dare again insult a virtuous maid
Whom Heaven protects,"—and worthy Friar John,
Who lurked unseen behind the hawthorn's shade,
Now proffered Lilias Lee his counsel and his aid.

Poor Lilias clung fast to his friendly side—
She felt as if kind Heaven had heard her prayer,
And sent the monk, who now began to chide.
"Why wilt thou, Lilias, thus such dangers dare?
Oft have I counselled thee to cautious care,
When in these lonely paths thou wont to stray."
"Thank God," said Lilias, "I have 'scaped this snare;
Alone again I ne'er shall chance this way:
In future thou shalt lead—I'll follow and obey."

"Stay, holy friar," Home now interposed,
"And Lilias, pardon thou my ardent love;
Let not the ear of mercy thus be closed
To cry of penitent, but let me move
Thy heart to pity him who fain would prove
His truth and fondness, by a whole life now
Devoted to thy service: Heaven above,
And thou, good father, shall record my vow:
Accept me as thine own, my lady bride be thou.

"Haste, father, lead us to thy cloistered cell;
Come, let the marriage-knot be instant tied:
Nor let thy voice in faintest whisper tell
This gentle maiden is my wedded bride.
Shortly shall I conduct with stately pride

My Lilias from her humble natal bower
Through Home's gay halls, to scatter blessings wide:
Then shall my sire forget the pomp of power,
And welcome with delight so sweet and fair a flower."

"Forbear," fair Lilias cried, "my lord, forbear;
No longer may I list such speech from thee.
Of noble Home's proud line thou art the heir,
A gay green sapling from an ancient tree,
And I am but a maid of low degree—
A wayside weed, to live and die unknown.
Then seek, I pray thee, fitter mate than me,—
One who hath sprung from name of high renown,
And whose ancestral tree is stately as thine own."

Whispers the monk whose arm the maid hangs on,
"Dear daughter, Home seems honest and sincere,
Then let him hope thy heart may yet be won;
To his fond love 'tis well to lend an ear:
Young Randal Rae may never more appear;
And one who hath forsaken maid so fair,
Sweet Lilias, is unworthy of a tear;
While Home with thee his boundless wealth will share,
And holy Church shall bless a young and happy pair."

Poor Lilias shrunk, with horror overcome,
While thus in accents low she faltering said:
"O haste thee, Father, let us hasten home;
The night grows dark, and I am sore afraid."
When, lo! a light gleams through the leafy glade
From her dear natal cot—her bosom warms,
She clasps her hands, young Home exclaims, "Dear maid!"
These words revive the timid maid's alarms,
And rushing on, she falls into her father's arms.

Though Walter Lee was waxing old and frail,
His daughter's welfare was his constant care:
He clasped her to his breast, "Why, why so pale?"
And from her forehead shaded back her hair.
"Thou'rt terror-stricken, child.—Could any dare
To harm thee?" And he gazed upon the friar,
Who silent stood. "Come, Lilias dear, declare
Who is't hath frightened thee? Thine aged sire
Thy virtues shall anew with youthful strength inspire."

"Help, help," she cries, "or my full heart will burst!
Save thy poor daughter, save her spotless fame!
Let not the child a widowed father nurst
Be forced to break her word, and soil thy name.
This friar urges to a deed of shame,

And sues for one whom I can never love.
Thou knowest Randal Rae may come to claim
His bride, whose vows are registered above,
And who implores thine aid her constancy to prove."

"Sure, Lilias dearest, honest Friar John
Would never urge thee to do aught that's wrong.
I fear that Randal Rae is dead and gone,
And thou must change the tenor of thy song:
Around thee crowds of rustic lovers throng,
Like a love-fair the house fills day by day.
Faith, Lilias, thou must wed thee, lass, ere long—
No use for endless doubting and delay,
So thou must choose a husband, be he who he may."

"And mark," quoth Father John, "no vulgar name
Is his, whose suit the maid would set aside,
But one whose rank entitles him to claim
A royal princess as a fitting bride;
Yet doth he freely doff his lordly pride,
And humbly sue for Lilias' peerless hand.
Thy fate, fair daughter, will be much envied;—
O'er these domains thy heirs shall have command:
'Tis young Lord Home who woos, in accents soft and bland.

"List to his suit then, Lilias," urged the friar,
"And let to-morrow be the wedding-day.
'Tis opportune—thy lover's noble sire
Is with the King, and cannot say us nay.
In Wilfrid's Chapel, at the gloaming grey,
We'll tie the knot, and still shall all be kept:
No one shall know, no one a word shall say,
Until thou hast in young Home's bosom slept:
Nay, take it not so sad—thou'rt not to be bewept."

"Daughter," said Lilias' sire, "and why should thou
Refuse the proffer of our gay young lord,
Pining for one who has not kept his vow,
Or who, now dead, can never be restored?
For thee what prospects does the scene afford?
How proud, how pleased, 'twill make old Walter Lee,
To see his Lilias by the great adored;—
To see her nursing lordlings on her knee!
Haste, Father, to good Home, and say the match shall be."

"Dear father, if thou wouldst not see me die,
Urge me upon this fatal course no more;
Wouldst have thy daughter wickedly to lie,
And say she loves whom she must needs abhor?"
"By heaven and earth!" the old man sternly swore,

"To-morrow, an thou live, we'll have thee tied:
A peasant sought thy plighted troth before,
But now a noble woos thee for his bride:
To rest, and dream of Home!—he shall not be denied."

Ah me, poor Lilias, thou art sore beset,
No one with friendly counsel thee to aid!
Within the meshes of a golden net
Thy sire's entangled, while a plan is laid
By ruffian monk to make thee, gentle maid,
The vilest thing that woman e'er can be.
The private marriage Home can soon evade
Of which no record's kept. Thy sire and thee
Are ruthless made the prey of artful treachery.

Is there no gallant page will mount and ride
In quest, fair maiden, of thine own true knight?
No faithful messenger whom Heaven might guide
To where thy Randal pines in gloomy plight,
Longing for thee as for the morning light?
Though told that thou thine early vow hast broken,
How could fell villany his prospects blight?
How should foul tongue such falsehood ere have spoken?
And ah, who kept from thee love-message, sign, and token?

Brave Randal at Home's festival had gained
The favour of the Monarch and his son,
Who placed him in their train, where he attained
To high distinction, and had honours won.
Oft to the Primate wended Friar John,
Still seeking after some rich vacant place;
At Court he'd Randal Rae imposed upon,
And Lilias belied with a truthlike face,
And thus had jealousy crept on with sure though stealthy pace.

The monk had been confessor to the youth,
The guileless youth had deemed the monk sincere;
His seeming friendship Randal took for truth,
And who so meet as such a friend to bear
Love-tokens to the maid he held so dear?
All were intrusted to the traitor's care,
Who in return had poisoned Randal's ear,
Persuading him that Home's licentious heir
Was now the chosen lover of the village fair.

The charity bestowed in hope of gain
Is with a mean usurious purpose given;
True Christian charity can ne'er refrain
From helping outcasts from their kindred riven;
And for all those whom want hath downward driven

Into the lowest depths, she feels the more,
As He who left the glorious courts of heaven
Did fallen man's sad fate in tears deplore,
And died, immortal life to mortals to restore.

Fair Lilias Lee, one morning in her walk,
Had met a wandering, shivering, ill-clad child,
Deformed and dumb, yet who by signs could talk,
Although his gestures were uncouth and wild.
He looked so guileless as he knelt and smiled,
Or shook his little head and shed a tear,
That Lilias, ever gentle, ever mild,
Kindly resolved the helpless child to rear,
And take the poor dwarf home, her lonely hearth to cheer.

And he became a wayward, wandering boy,
Rarely, if ever, to be found at home;
Eager to lead in every merry ploy,
Or steal away through trackless wilds to roam.
Then he would plunge into the river's foam,
Or scale the mountain-steep with fearless glee,
And, after weeks away, he home would come,
Bringing such presents to fair Lilias Lee
As made her marvel much from whence such gifts could be.

The child had now been absent for a while,
No one knew where; but on that hapless night
When Lilias was surrounded by such guile,
The boy came home, all buoyant with delight.
He reached the door, but started in affright—
He heard Lee's voice raised high in angry tone,
And off unseen he fled, like noiseless sprite.
Ha! whither hath the idle truant gone,
Leaving his benefactress friendless and alone?

All the long night did Lilias Lee bemoan
Her fate, and wish she never had been born;
Her father muttering ever and anon,
E'en through his sleep, "Come, Lilias, I'll be sworn
Thou'rt dreaming of the happy bridal morn
That waits thy waking, and shall end thy woes."
And Lilias, trembling, felt still more forlorn,
Till in despair her streaming eyes would close,
And wearied nature seek in troubled dreams repose.

Darkness had fled, and morning's orient beam
Streamed brightly over mountain, dale, and plain.
Was Lilias Lee awake, or did she dream—
Whence came that warbling lute's sweet-sounding strain?
Say, had her little page returned again?

She started, and in shadow could descry
His tiny face pressed on the window-pane.
She gazed ; in signs the mute informed her eye
That in her darkest hour assistance would be nigh.

CANTO V.

The autumn day hath wellnigh gone, and now
The setting sun gleams brightly o'er the wold,
Lighting the dark firs on the mountain brow,
Decking their dusky stems with green and gold.
The sheep bleat homeward to their distant fold;
Through all the air melodious sounds are borne;
And oh! what tales of ardent love are told
Amid these fields of yellow, waving corn!
Long, long may scenes like these fair Scotland's dales
adorn!

What is the rose that's reared in garden bowers,
The gorgeous dahlia with its orient hues,
To the wild water-nourished native flowers
That such sweet fragrance through our vales diffuse?
Their crimsons, yellows, purples, pinks, and blues

Rise from the dark-green sward or rocklet grey;
The streamlet's music all with love imbues,
And water-lilies bend to kiss the spray,
Which, buoyant and elastic, bounds in mirth away.

Down the lone path, close by the streamlet's side,
O'erarched with trees, and clothed with blooming flowers,
The monk and Lee half-drag the trembling bride,
Who forth her grief in wailing accents pours.
Regardless they of all her tearful showers,
They lead the maiden on to rank and state;
And Lee, while gazing on Home's distant towers,
Cries, "There, my Lilias, honours on thee wait;
How happy shalt thou be with such a lordly mate!"

Deep in the glen, safe from the stormy breeze,
Upon a rising knoll of grassy green,
Surrounded by tall rows of stately trees,
The tufted pinnacles and towers are seen
Of Wilfred's Chapel: silent and serene
Is all around;—nought breaks the still repose,
While those grey tombstones tell of who hath been,
And moving tales of bygone times disclose—
Epitomes of man, his hopes, his joys, his woes.

They pass the porch where sculptured warriors lie,
The nave and chancel burst upon their sight;
The walls, with texts illumed, in tones that vie
With the ethereal rainbow—coloured light
Which through the painted windows gleams so bright,
Gilt by the last beams of the setting sun:
Sure 'tis the hour of love, and truth, and right—
Can Heaven permit dark deeds should here be done,
Or virtue sacrificed on such an altar stone?

Noble bequests of holy charity
Are here on marble and on brass engraved;
Recumbent knights ask you to bend the knee,
And pray that their immortal souls be saved.
Revere their sacred dust! they boldly braved
The country's common foe in days of yore,
When o'er each tower the tyrant's banner waved,
With Wallace wight—they strode through fields of gore,
And died, their native land's lost freedom to restore.

Bowing and smiling, clothed in rich attire,
Home at the altar waits the little band;
Lilias' cold hand is kissed with lips of fire,
And he accosts her thus in accents bland—
"O happy day! O rapture thus to stand

Beside thee, Lilias, soon my charming bride.
Haste, holy father, haste! This gentle hand
Make mine, and then, let weal or woe betide,
No power save that of death shall e'er our loves divide."

"Young lord, let me entreat thee," Lilias said,
"Proceed no further in this dark design;
A broken heart else to thy charge be laid—
Another's plighted bride can ne'er be thine.
All ties of blood and kindred I'll resign,
Yea, life itself, so that I die but true:
If dead, my Randal, at this holy shrine,
To thee in heaven I all my vows renew;
Our bridal wreath shall be the dark funereal yew."

"Thou ravest, girl," exclaimed old Walter Lee;
"Thy broken heart, my child, shall mend apace:
Be proud high Home should stoop to such as thee,
And thus ennoble all our humble race.
Kneel, trifler, kneel, and thank him for his grace."
"Behold," quoth Friar John, "she yields consent,
And at the altar takes the appointed place—
Shall we proceed? Her knees in prayer are bent,
And her mild face bespeaks a calm and sweet consent."

Fair Lilias at the altar meekly knelt,
Her hands were clasped, her eyes were raised on high;
The spell-bound group an inward tremor felt,
As thus she murmured in a deep-drawn sigh—
"Deliver me, or let me instant die!
Kind Heaven, to thee this last appeal I make."
When, lo! as if in answer to her cry,
A trumpet's notes the slumbering echoes wake,
And now the startled group with guilty terrors quake.

Ha! hark! a living flood comes rushing on;
Again the trumpet-tones are heard more clear;
Nearer and nearer still they come, anon
The tramp of hurried chargers strikes the ear.
The porch grows dark, the listeners start in fear,
All save poor Lilias, who in speechless joy
Clasps to her bosom, while a grateful tear
Steals o'er her cheek, her little fairy boy,
Who onward unseen glides, hope's smiling bright envoy.

From their tall chargers downward lightly spring,
With courtly air, stout baron, lord, and knight;
They bend the knee, they gather round their King
And primate Prince, who gracefully alight.
Their surcoats, richly blazoned, sparkle bright;

Their towering plumes are waving wide and high.
"What means this pageant?" asks the monk in fright;
He's answered by a herald's shrill-toned cry,
That makes the vaulted church re-echo this reply:

"Be't known to all men that our good King James—
To whom God grant a long and happy reign—
Through me, his servant, his high will proclaims,
If any one hath aught of to complain,
If humblest vassal or if meanest swain
At their superiors' hands have suffered wrong,
Let them speak out, they shall not speak in vain;
His ear is open and his arm is strong
To hear and help the poor: may Heaven preserve him long!"

Now steps the monarch forth with princely mien,
The recreant monk in abject mien draws near;
The gallant King beholds the bridal scene:
"What! holy friar, hast got a marriage here?
Nay, blush not so, fair maid, no cause for fear;
Our prelate son the marriage-knot shall tie
That binds thee to this youth. What! still a tear?"
And now young Home, half skulking, meets his eye:
"Grammercy!" quoth the King, "here's some foul perjury.

"Wert thou not, maiden, pledged to Randal Rae?
Wert thou not once a peasant's plighted bride?
Well we remember us that holiday
When thou wert that young hero's joy and pride.
How comes this other bridegroom by thy side?
Come, quickly tell us how this comes about;
Hast thou for rank thy virgin troth belied?
Hath Randal Rae proved false and played the lout?
Speak, quickly speak, and let this double treason out."

Low at the monarch's feet fair Lilias knelt:
"My liege! my liege! my heart unchanged and true
Still feels for Randal all it ever felt,
And for thy gracious aid I humbly sue.
By force I'm hither dragged, to bid adieu
To truth, and marry with the young Lord Home;
But ere I will in guilt my soul imbue,
This chapel shall become my virgin tomb,
And I will Randal meet beyond yon azure dome."

"I crave your pardon, good my liege," quoth Lee;
"Hath parent o'er his child no parent's power?
I'm old and feeble; she hath none save me,
And God knows, Lilias hath small marriage dower.
Randal hath long been gone. The lowly flower

I nursed so fondly, he had left to die;
But now, good Home will plant it in a bower,
Where with the finest it will quickly vie,
And I will see my child ennobled ere I die."

Stout Baron Home, who with the illustrious throng
Had entered, his dark eye now flashing fire,
Steps bluntly forward: "By the mass, 'tis wrong
In thee, my son, thus to disgrace thy sire;
Couldst thou not find some other to admire,
But thou must woo a beggar for thy mate?
Since thus thou darest to provoke mine ire—
Thank Heaven I know thee ere it prove too late—
My daughter Madeline shall heir my broad estate."

"Now hear me, sire, ere such decree you pass;
Your son hath not forgot his high descent.
All this was but to try this simple lass,
For whom her father was on greatness bent;
The bridal was but feigned, and never meant
For aught but harmless jest. The damsel's free,
And would have been so. Are you now content
To stay and join us in our merry glee,
And free from fancied greatness humble Lilias Lee?"

"Now, by our halidom," exclaimed the King,
"The marriage shall proceed, come what come may.
A virtuous maiden's heart is no fit thing
For lord or monk to torture thus in play.
Our royal self the bride shall give away,
Our primate son shall tie the bridal band.
Frown not, brave Home, but bid thy son obey:
We must protect the humble of the land—
Justice must be dispensed with an impartial hand."

"Urge not this course, my liege!" the maid exclaimed;
"Thou canst not wish me faithless now to be.
My fancied faithlessness thou justly blamed,
Then keep me faithful, and, oh, keep me free!
Thou wouldst not have me, upon any plea,
Belie the truth, and break my solemn plight;
For thou art Heaven's vicegerent, and to thee,
Whose throne is based on justice and on right,
I humbly thus appeal to shield me by thy might."

"So be it," James replies; "but married straight
We'll have thee. Thou art now a royal ward;
Thy lover must be false or dead; his fate
'Tis meet thou mourn with due and just regard,
But who'll protect thee from this gay young lord?

Come, now, we'll force him pay thy marriage dower;
I'll help thee to a husband shall afford
Thee sure protection, one whose manly power
Shall guard from every blast so sweet and fair a flower."

"The heart once fixed can never change, great King;
Heaven hath protected, and will guard me still;
To my first love my heart must ever cling;
True to my plighted vow I fear no ill,
But bend me meekly to the Almighty's will.
Dead or alive—I know my Randal true,
Then leave me thus my promise to fulfil;
In solitude still leave me to renew
My vows to him whose form is ever in my view."

"Speak on, dear Lilias thus, thy lover's ear
Feasts on thy tones, his eye upon thy charms,"
And Randal forward rushes from the rear;
The startled maid sinks blushing in his arms;
Their faithful hearts are freed from all alarms,
A halo hovers o'er the holy scene,
Each gazer's eye is moist, each bosom warms,
All save the guilty, who, now smarting keen,
In terror seek to skulk away with abject mien.

"What, ho! secure the knaves," the Monarch cries,
"This double-damnèd plot we must unfold;
Whoe'er shall utter one false word, he dies;
Truth is more precious than the thrice-tried gold.
Speak, Randal, freely, let the truth be told;
Say by whose arts thy thoughts were led astray
From this fair maid, and all shall soon behold
How justice ever holds her even way,
While truth and virtue thrive beneath our royal sway."

"This hoary monk, my liege," the youth replied,
"Who to your court such frequent visits paid,
Was my confessor, and was oft supplied
By me with tokens to this lovely maid,
Until 'she'd broke her plighted vows,' he said.
Implicit credence to his words I gave.
Deceived and duped, my faithful heart essayed
To make my bridal bed a soldier's grave;
And thus while courting death, the world pronounced me brave."

"Mercy, my liege," the trembling monk exclaimed,
"And let me from this cruel charge be freed.
The young Lord Home alone is to be blamed;
'Twas he who urged me to this wicked deed;
All that I said was with a view to lead

To some such happy ending as you see.
I thought that Randal would have mounted steed
And challenged Home, or sought his Lilias Lee;
I but repeated that which Home had told to me."

"What!" quoth young Home, "wilt thou to lie thus dare?
Thou know'st thou wert my leader and my guide;
In every movement of the whole affair
The tact of Friar John may be descried;
This damsel never could have been my bride.
The marriage was but feigned to please her sire,
And who so apt to feed an old man's pride,
Or pander to a youngster's warm desire,
As this fair-speaking, cozening, double-dealing friar."

"Ha," cries the Monarch, "still the proverb's good,
When knaves fall out, do true men get their own.
This friar's old and frail, or, by the rood,
We'd have him horse-whipped through each borough town.
This young lord too hath equal vileness shown,
The gallows would be graced by such a pair;
But to our son who wears the primate's gown
We leave the monk—to Home we leave his heir—
Believing neither will such knaves unjustly spare."

"Old man," the Primate said, "by this dark deed
Upon thine order thou hast brought disgrace;
And I do now denounce thee: on thy head
Be holy Church's ban; all men shall trace
The brand of shame upon thy guilty face.
Strip thee of hood and cloak, and get thee gone,
In crime's low haunts to seek a kindred race,
Or roam through regions desolate alone,
There thou may'st howl unheeded thy unpitied moan."

In tears, old Home—"Base boy no longer mine,
Thou who hast played so mean and vile a part,
Go, take the road, thy friend in crime to join;
I bar thee from my home, and from my heart.
Nor need'st thou hope by any subtle art
To alter my resolve, or change my will;
'Twas thou who aimed and shot the poisoned dart
That makes this aged breast with anguish thrill.
Thank God, my daughter's left, my joy, my comfort still."

But now bounds forward, light and full of joy,
Leaping and frisking like some merry sprite,
The elfin dwarf, fair Lilias' orphan boy,
In dress of green, broidered with silver bright—
The Monarch pats his head with fond delight.

To Lilias' side the fairy springs again;
All gaze astonished at the unwonted sight;
And now the Monarch hastens to explain—
The elfin was his page, the fleetest in his train.

"Now listen to our tale," the Monarch cries:
"At Court one day we chanced to overhear
This knavish monk pouring his ven'mous lies
Into the unsuspecting Randal's ear;
We knew the monk and Home were friends. 'Twas clear
The knaves were plotting 'gainst the lovers' weal;
We sent our page, disguised, to hover near,
For we could trust his honesty and zeal,
And as he did advise we purposed so to deal.

An ill-clad child won gentle Lilias' grace,
She had him clothed, and took him home to stay;
None dreamt the dumb dwarf heeded what took place,
While to our ear all tidings made their way.
Last night the boy heard Lilias' bridal-day
Fixed 'gainst her will by lawless tyranny;
We sojourned near, and thus were brought to stay
A cruel deed of heartless treachery,
And join brave Randal Rae to beauteous Lilias Lee.

"Dear Sire," exclaims the Monarch's gentle son,
"In wedlock's bonds we'll now unite the twain;
Thou didst foretell their hearts would yet be one,
When round their necks thou twined a golden chain.
Well I remember me that happy plain,
Those manly games of stalwart joyous play;
And now the fairest maid and boldest swain
Are joined together on this happy day.
Strike all your harps, and chant a glorious roundelay."

And now the Primate at the altar stands;
Randal and Lilias, full of truth and love,
Bend them before him; now he joins their hands,
While all invoke a blessing from above.
The lovers feel the chain that love hath wove
Link lightly round them in their bridal hour;
Its strength their future lives alone can prove.
When sorrows sadden, or when dangers lower,
Then love and truth shine forth with treble light and power.

MALCOLM CANMORE

KING OF SCOTLAND

An Historical Play

MALCOLM CANMORE.

After the murder of his father Duncan, King of Scotland, Malcolm Canmore fled to England, where he was educated, and became the friend of the Saxon Royal Family. After the death of King Harold, and the defeat of his army at Hastings, the Royal Family, along with a number of the Saxon nobility, sought refuge at the Scottish Court, where they remained many years. Shortly after their arrival, Malcolm married Margaret, sister of Edgar Atheling, and to this alliance Scotland was mainly indebted for the civilisation of her people and the establishment of Christianity. As a queen, wife, and mother, Margaret was all that could be desired, and the old Church derived greater lustre from her name than that of any other saint in her calendar.

The Celtic priests and chieftains, led by the Druids (who, according to some historians, maintained them-

selves in their settlements there till about the middle of the thirteenth century), were much offended at the innovations on their ancient creeds and customs, and on this is founded the incident of their attempted assassination of Malcolm. The manner in which the plot was discovered and met by the Monarch, as shown in the play, is exactly that in which he overcame and punished one of his courtiers on a similar occasion.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

WILLIAM THE NORMAN,	*King of England.*
MALCOLM CANMORE, .	*King of Scotland.*
EDGAR ATHELING, .	*The Saxon Heir to the English Throne.*
WALTER, . . .	*The Steward of Scotland.*
GOSPATRICK, . . .	*A Saxon Commander.*
FITZOSBORNE, . .	*A Norman Commander.*
GILDUS, . . .	*A Highland Chieftain.*
CLONVAL, . . .	*A Caledonian Druid.*
CARRON, . . .	*A Scottish Peasant, afterwards a Leader in the Scottish Army.*
TOSTI, ...	*A Saxon Clown.*

Chieftains, Soldiers, Messengers, Heralds, &c.

AGATHA, . . .	*Mother of Edgar Atheling.*
MARGARET, . . .	*Sister of Edgar Atheling.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Courtyard of an ancient Saxon Palace and Abbey, overgrown with ivy and surrounded with sylvan scenery.*

(*Enter* EDGAR ATHELING, AGATHA, *and* MARGARET.)

EDGAR.—Urge me no further on this point, dear mother;
Although by birth the English crown was mine,
And Edward at his death did so bequeath it,
Yet Harold, of maturer years than I,
Soon wrenched the sceptre from my boyish grasp.
The Nation loved me, but they hailed him King,
And he hath showered on me such princely gifts
That I shall never seek his overthrow
By joining with the Norman.
AGATHA.— But that Norman
Well knows that in thy name there is a spell
Will make all England rally round thy standard;

And he avows himself thy champion.
Yet as this Harold doles thee out a pittance,
Small portion of thine own inheritance,
Thou wilt not help to thrust him from thy throne.

MARGARET.—My gentle mother, wherefore urge dear Edgar
To leave our home where love delights to dwell—
To leave this holy fane, which pious art
In ancient times hath reared with wondrous skill,
Where every breeze that murmurs through the aisles,
Wafts us the blessings of the grateful poor?
Ah! my dear mother, all the blood-stained trophies
By battle gained, can never match with these.

EDGAR.—Such sentiments become a sex, dear sister,
Whose gentle patience triumphs o'er misfortune,
And teaches men the virtue of endurance.
Yet would I fain enforce my mother's claims,
And thine, dear sister, for the love you bear me,
But may not raise a lance against King Harold.

(*Shouts are heard in the distance—they approach nearer. The group, startled, listen.*)

AGATHA.—A mother's ear can catch each distant voice
Shouting for Edgar, England's darling King.
Joy, joy, my son, the day is all thine own,
And on thy brow I'll see the English crown.

(*Knocking at gate of courtyard. Enter messenger, from a journey. Numbers of Peasantry in the background, shouting.*)

Hail, King Edgar!

MESSENGER.—William of Normandy, by me his servant,
Desires to hail thee, Edgar, King of England!
Harold lies slain upon the field at Hastings!
His Saxon army conquered and dispersed
By the tough valour of our Norman Lord,
Who hurries on his way to Westminster,
There to prepare and tarry for thy crowning;
The ceremony waits your Highness' presence.

(*Enter* TOSTI *as from a journey. He presents a wreath of yew to* EDGAR, *and sings.*)

(TOSTI *sings.*)

O sleep, gentle Edgar, fair heir to the crown,
In curtains of silk, and on cushions of down;
When Norman tends Saxon, the Saxon may weep,
For ne'er shall their darling awake from his sleep.
Hee O, wee O, death's in the cradle,
Mail-clad nurses claim bloody pay:
Hee O, wee O, leap to the saddle,
Bear your darling far, far away.

MESSENGER.—What mumming knave is this, whose subtle strain
Dares to impugn the Norman's noble purpose,
To crown thee, Edgar, England's sov'reign King?

TOSTI (*to* EDGAR).—Here is a crown shall cool thy temples. The Norman seeks to brand thy brow with red-hot iron, and send thee to bear Harold company in heaven, leaving the monks to twine a twin garland of glory for the last of the Saxon princes.

AGATHA.—Peace, foolish Tosti! hold thy impious tongue
In presence of a prince's messenger.

(TOSTI *sings.*)

Why wilt thou fear me,
Dear little lamb?
Come, play thou near me,
I'll be thy dam.
With nimble feet patt'ring,
The lambkin draws nigh;
The wolf's chops are wat'ring,
The lambkin must die!

EDGAR (*aside*).—There's meaning in the witling's song, good mother.

Tosti, thou knave, thou darest not impeach
The purpose of the gallant Norman William.

Tosti.—Nay, nay, I daresay his messenger repeats his lesson correctly, and by the book, I warrant thee; but a fool can read a knave's meaning best, as thou shalt hear. The Norman wolf commends his services to the Saxon lamb, and longs to hug him in a fond embrace. Such is the Norman message conveyed by the Saxon fool.

Agatha (*to* Tosti).—No more of this intrusion, sir
—no more!
(*To* Messenger)—Pray you excuse this prating, witless
fellow,
He goes the full length of his privilege,
Yet means no ill.

Messenger.—Strange he should be here;
He stood by Harold through the whole day's fight,
And when I left upon this sudden journey,
He sat by Harold's corse, humming a strain,
As grandame lulls her infant charge asleep.

(Tosti *sings.*)

Hey, ninny, nonny, kings are bonny,
Clothed in ermine, crowned in gold,
Hey baby bunting—glory hunting,
Warrior knights ride brave and bold.

King and knight lie cold in clay;
Crown and helmet, where be they?

MARGARET.—Alas! poor fool! he loved his master well;
See how the tell-tale tears bedew his cheeks.
Come, cheer thee, Tosti; wherefore spedst thou hither?

(TOSTI *sings.*)

Folly's flight is day and night,
High, low, the wind will blow;
Bells may chime the flight of time,
Folly's wanderings none may know.
Now high, now low, come weal, come woe,
A good hard head for a good hard blow.

Grandame Care cries, Child, beware;
Ha! ha! cries the carrion crow.
Wander on, alone, alone;
Run, and gather the pretty snow.
When white flakes fall, and cold winds blow,
Thou art mine, cries the carrion crow.

(*Enter, as from a journey,* GOSPATRICK *and followers; they make obeisance to* EDGAR,

AGATHA, *and* MARGARET. GOSPATRICK *perceives the* NORMAN MESSENGER, *and approaches him.*)

GOSPATRICK.—Traitor, begone! Thou'rt here for some dark purpose;
I know it well, for well I know thy master.
Wouldst lure the gentle Edgar to his toils?
Vile knave, thy subtle slippery tongue hath lapped
The crimson blood of twice ten thousand Saxons,
Whose spirits cry aloud to Heaven for vengeance.
(MESSENGER *begins to turn away.*)
Nay, stir not hence. (*to* ATTENDANT)
Secure this smooth-faced villain
Within the castle's deepest donjon keep.

EDGAR. — Why, why, Gospatrick, this unseemly anger?
Is this fit greeting for a stranger, who
Hath brought us tidings fraught with peace and joy?
Thy prince was by this Norman messenger
Invited to be crowned at Westminster.
And there, he said, Duke William stayed our coming.

GOSPATRICK.—Crowned! murdered is the word, my honoured lord.
No marvel, then, my Saxon blood is up,
As thine shall be when thou hast heard my tale.

Defeated on the fatal field of Hastings,
In orderly retreat we left the ground,
Proclaimed thee king, and thousands round us rallied,
Prepared to do good battle in thy cause.
This knave arrived, an envoy from the Norman,
Told us his master was thy truest friend,
Proposed a truce, that we might go together,
And in Westminster crown thee England's king.
Relying on this proffered amnesty,
Sudden we halted, when the murd'rous horde,
While yet our arms were opened to receive them,
Buried their swords in our unguarded breasts.
I 'scaped, and hither quickly sped to warn thee
To seek the shelter of some friendly power
Until thy subjects gather strength anew
To rid them of the Norman's iron yoke.

EDGAR.—Thanks, brave Gospatrick ; thou hast saved a life
To be devoted to our country's service.
But whither shall we fly for present aid?
My mother and my sister are in peril,
And dearer they to me than place or power.
I may not, cannot leave them.

AGATHA.— Thanks, dear son.
We'll share thy perils; thou shalt share our fortunes.

Say, shall we seek our own Hungarian home,
And bid farewell to England's shores for ever?

EDGAR.—Nay, mother, we'll remain, prepared to seize
The spring of fortune's tide which yet may flow.
Malcolm hath oft invited me to Scotland;
King Edward was his friend—we'll seek his court.
Around us shall the loyal Saxons gather,
And with assistance of the hardy Scots,
We yet may drive the Norman from our shore.

MARGARET.—Dear brother, thou wouldst ne'er for us embroil
In war a prince whose power is gentleness.
No, let us rather aid his good intent
To raise his country by the arts of peace.

TOSTI (*sings in an under-tone.*)—

There was a gay bachelor, and a fair maid,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho.
The maiden she sighed, and the bachelor prayed,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho.
War called on the gallant his courage to prove,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho.
Call me to-morrow, this day is for love,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho.

GOSPATRICK.—Instant departure let me counsel, sire.
The Norman bloodhounds snuff the tell-tale air,
And we shall scarce escape.

EDGAR.— Then haste, dear mother
And sister; get thy travelling-gear prepared
With all despatch. We'll have our horses saddled,
And shortly be upon our way to Scotland. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.—*The Grampian Mountains. A knoll on which a standard is planted. A forest in the background.*

(*Enter* GILDUS *and other* HIGHLAND CHIEFTAINS.)

GILDUS.—How now, my brother chieftains! what's astir,
That by the fiery brand we're hither summoned?

FIRST CHIEFTAIN.—The purpose must be warlike, when yon standard
Waves proudly o'er the grave of mighty Fingal.
Here comes great Clonval, he'll unfold the tale.

(*Enter* CLONVAL, *a Druid.*)

CLONVAL.—All hail, brave chieftains! To this sacred spot
I've summoned you for grave deliberation.
'Twere time war's fiery banner was unfurled,

'Twere time the beacon blazed upon the hill,
'Twere time the war-pipe sounded in the vale,
When the last landmarks of our independence
Are headlong hurled away by Malcolm Canmore.

CHIEFTAINS (*except* GILDUS, *exclaim.*)—Death to Malcolm Canmore!

GILDUS (*surprised.*)— Death to Malcolm Canmore?

CLONVAL.—Ay, Malcolm Canmore! Start not at the sound.
The spirits of our sires float o'er our heads
Shrouded in mist, and wrapt in deepest gloom,
Mourning that all for which they bled and died,
Laws and Religion, all, all must be changed
To suit the humour of a changeling king.

GILDUS.—Thy speech hath more of sound than wit, good Clonval;
All nature's full of change. An onward course
Is visible in all her mighty movements,
And Malcolm, having spent his early days
In Edward's court, had studied there refinements
Which now he seeks to introduce to us.
Such change, I fain would think, were for your weal;
But you condemn what I esteem a virtue.

SECOND CHIEFTAIN.—What! wouldst uproot the ancient Scottish thistle,

And choke the soil with noxious Saxon weeds?
Wouldst have us humbly kneel to Saxon churls,
And pray them take possession of our lands?
Bear witness, heaven and earth, this dagger's point
Shall cleave this Malcolm's heart.

(*The other* CHIEFTAINS, *except* GILDUS, *draw, and cross daggers, exclaiming*)

CHIEFTAINS.— And ours! We swear!

GILDUS.—If by those signs I am to understand
You meditate the murder of your king,
I'll be no party to so base a deed.

CLONVAL.—Thou must abide the issue of debate,
Yielding thy wishes to the common voice.
Shall the bright sun seek lustre from the moon?
And shall the chieftains of free Caledon
Follow the car of this insulting monarch,
Begging for grace and supplicating mercy?

FIRST CHIEFTAIN.—The gods forefend! Revenge, revenge, dread Clonval;
Thou'rt guardian of the sacred rites of Thor,
Then say how this revenge may be achieved.

CLONVAL.—We dare not now brave Malcolm in the field,
His army's numerous, and skilled in war.
Gildus, thou hast free access to the court;

A dagger's point might serve our purpose well;
'Twould please the gods, and set thy country free.

GILDUS.—The God of truth would loathe such sacrifice.

Freedom disdains the aid of treachery,
And heaven and earth abhor ingratitude.
Good Malcolm loads me constantly with favours:
Wouldst have me basely slay my benefactor?

CLONVAL.—Boy, if thy country's weal demand thy life,
Thy duty 'tis to yield it cheerfully;
But if this proffered honour thou refuse,
Let fate decide whose hand shall strike the blow.

(CLONVAL *cuts some twigs from a hazel-tree, which, forming them into a wreath, and ascending the knoll, he suspends from the top of the standard. Having then blindfolded himself, he thus addresses the surrounding* CHIEFTAINS):—

Warriors, plant your daggers round
This green spot of holy ground:
And the blade this right arm draws,
Shall avenge our broken laws.

The CHIEFTAINS, *after marching round the circular knoll, plant their daggers at equal*

distances, and kneel after the manner of CLONVAL, *who exclaims,*)

Guardian of the brave and free,
Mighty Thor, we bow to thee!
By heroic Fingal's name,
By prophetic Ossian's fame,
By thy love of truth and right,
We conjure thee, lend thy light;
To thy priest in vision show
Whose bright blade shall strike the blow
Doomed to lay the despot low.
Who would dare to raise his throne,
'Mid the wilds of Caledon?

(CLONVAL *now marches round the knoll, and grasps the handle of the dagger of* GILDUS, *who exhibits marked displeasure and disappointment.* CLONVAL *now removes the bandage from his eyes, and, taking the hazel wreath from the standard, advances to* GILDUS *exclaiming,*)

Let this wreath of hazel bough
Twine around thy manly brow:
Have thou courage, have thou faith,
Dread no danger, fear no scaith;
Trust the gods, their high decree

To this honour calleth thee.
And their potent mystic charm
Guards their chosen one from harm.
Instant seek King Malcolm's court,
Join his minions in their sport;
I shall thither wend with thee,
Welcomed for my minstrelsy.
We shall watch while guilt's asleep;
Daggers shall be buried deep;
Hearts shall quake, and blood shall flow;
We shall freely come and go.

(CHIEFTAINS *advance, exclaiming to* GILDUS *and* CLONVAL,)

Your names shall be enshrined for ages hence,
Within the grateful heart of every Scot.

GILDUS (*aside*).—As vile assassins of a generous prince!

Cursed be the fate that doomed me to this deed.

CLONVAL.—Come then, good Gildus, let's forthwith depart,
And on our way I'll show the pressing cause
For this thy deed, had Malcolm been thy sire.
Better that boys should weep than greybeards sigh;
Better a monarch than a nation die! (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III.—*The Courtyard of Dunfermline Palace. Flourish of trumpets outside the gate.*

(*Enter* KING MALCOLM *from grand porchway, meets* WALTER, *the Steward of Scotland, and other Scottish Thanes, who have newly returned from Galloway. Soldiers seen outside.*)

MALCOLM.—Welcome, brave Steward, from the hard-fought field;
These Gal'way kernes would try your tempered steel:
A victory over such impetuous hordes,
Amid their own impervious fastnesses,
Such skill as thine alone could have achieved;
And we shall hold a joyous festival,
To mark our sense of this important deed:
Oh! may it prove the harbinger of peace,
The last of these unseemly civil broils.

STEWARD.—Amen, my liege! may each succeeding day
Bear in its breast a bud of joyful peace;
Scotland is now desirous of repose,
Under the olive planted by her king.
While journeying hither, we were warmly hailed;
Each little village decked itself with flowers,
And poured its happy population forth:

Their cheerful looks and merry shouts proclaimed
How much they loved their sovereign, Malcolm Canmore.

MALCOLM.—Ay, Steward, and the swart-browed artizan
May use a sword as well as wield a hammer,
And when he's skilled in some ingenious craft,
He'll fight no whit the worse for king and country.

STEWARD.—A gallant peasant I have brought with me,
A living proof of your remark, my liege;
He left his ploughing as our army passed,
And took his place e'en in our foremost ranks:
Amid the thickest of the fight he rushed,
Around him soon were strewn huge heaps of slain,
And but for his brave daring we had found
Our Gal'way victory not so aptly gained:
Yet seemed he all unconscious of his prowess,
And begged that I would leave him where we met,
To plough and sow his little croft of corn.

MALCOLM. — If such be now the spirit which pervades
Our peasants' breasts, we'll rival ancient Rome.
Let this Scotch Cincinnatus come before us.

(*Exit* STEWARD, *who returns, followed by* CARRON, *a peasant of gigantic stature and*

modest bearing, but of blunt and simple manners.)

MALCOLM.—Welcome to court, brave sir. Our general
Has brought us such report of thy bold bearing
And peaceful habits, as hath won our favour;
And if it suits thy humour to remain
With us now, when the times are staid and peaceful,
We'll give thee charge of these, our palace-grounds,
To cultivate them as thou deemest best.

CARRON.—In sooth, my lord, I would be foolish to refuse your offer. The croft that I had at the foot of the Galloway hills did not keep me half employed, and I often got my labour for my pains. My hill neighbours were as poor as they were lazy, and although they would neither sow oats, nor plant kail, they were aye ready to help themselves to what they wanted, without either asking or obtaining leave frae either laird or tenant. No wonder, then, I dealt them a few strokes when I met them in battle. They had on the previous night emptied my barns of corn and my fields of cattle.

MALCOLM.—Thy name, friend?

CARRON.—Carron, my lord.

MALCOLM.—Then, Carron, thou shalt have thy full revenge.

Under thy charge we'll place these lawless kerns,
Ta'en by thy valour on the field of battle;
And thou shalt teach them how to till and plough,
As well as thou hast taught them how to fight.

CARRON.—I'll warrant thee, my lord, the sturdy loons shall soon mak' bonny wark on the rich haughs and holmes around Dunfermline. Gin they winna lead, they shall be driven. The horse that won't obey the bridle must have a touch o' the spur.

MALCOLM.—Then, Carron, 'tis concluded. Thou shalt have
These grounds in thine own charge, and shall remain
An inmate of our court in time of peace—
In battle we may need thy powerful arm.

CARRON.—You may rely on all the pith that I can muster being aye ready at your command, my liege.

(*Enter* GILDUS *and* CLONVAL. *The King grasps* GILDUS *by the hand.*)

MALCOLM.—Welcome, brave Gildus, to our royal court;
We read thy loyal mission in thine eyes;
Their utterance leaves thy tardy speech behind.
This ancient bard, too, seems as if he came
To celebrate in verse our recent victory.
How fare our gallant kinsmen in the north?

We trust they now begin to sow and plough,
And cultivate the genial arts of peace.

GILDUS.—In sooth, my liege, the work goes slowly on;
My neighbours are so stuffed with ancient saws,
They have but little room for modern nostrums;
They love the native verdure of the hills,
They love the waving forests of the plains,
And cling with fond and pious veneration
To the old modes and habits of their sires.
I pray thee, bear with them, my gracious liege,
A little longer; time may bring about
The change you seek. Haste, now, is fraught with danger.

MALCOLM. — Tut, Gildus! like the leech who disregards
The patient's loathing to the draught prescribed,
We'll force our subjects to adopt such laws
As our experience urges for their good;
But more of this anon. The banquet waits;
This evening we'll devote to festal mirth,
To-morrow we'll take horse for Lothian forest,
And seek the pleasure of th' inspiring chase.

CLONVAL (*half aside*).—Banish old men from the land,

Give the young supreme command,
Trust the reins to folly's hand;
Laugh and sing, and dance and play,
Seek to drive dull thought away;
Reason still must have her sway.
Knaves and fools may play their parts—
He must practise nobler arts,
Who would rule a nation's hearts.

MALCOLM.—Ha, friend! a cloud has gathered on thy brow;
Shake off this gloomy mood, and join our mirth.
Good Carron, to thy care we leave the bard;
Let thy good-humour chase his grief away,
And shortly we shall have him in the hall,
Striking his northern harp with wond'rous skill,
Chanting the mighty deeds of Scotland's kings,
From royal Fergus down to Malcolm Canmore.

(*Exeunt* OMNES, *save* CARRON *and* CLONVAL.)

CLONVAL (*looking after the* KING, *speaks in an under tone*)—
Now Gildus, come, clutch firm thy dagger's hilt,
And thrust the weapon home; our mountain-winds
Shall howl in savage joy his unsung dirge.

CARRON.—There's danger here. Hilloah, friend! you seem somewhat hazy—wrapt in a Highland mist, eh?

Tut, man! what care I for your lowering brow and flashing eye? I have bearded owre mony Galloway mountaineers to fear you, i' faith; so come out of your grandeur an' your gloom, an' you please rub up your dark countenance. Clear your throat and tell us, man, what ye are aiming at.

CLONVAL.—Avaunt, base lowland serf! The mountain Gael
Holds no communion with thy servile race;
Nor dar'st thou look upon the sunward flights
Of the proud eagles of the stormy North,
Where Freedom's star shines with resplendent light.

CARRON.—Bah! Freedom, forsooth, to cut throats and steal cattle! By my faith, there's little light needed for sic exploits. Ye are liker owls than eagles, and love the dark night better than the bright day.

CLONVAL.—I came not here to bandy words with thee;
Go, pander to thy royal master's pride,—
For me, I'll seek the breezy battlements,
Where, unrestrained, I freely may commune
With mine own spirit, and may pray the gods
For my poor country's speedy 'scape from thraldom.

CARRON (*retiring*).—There's danger here, and there must be a strict watch kept on these Highlanders.

Here comes his neighbour to hae a conference, I'll warrant ye. I'll e'en slip in ahint this yett, and listen. I understand their lingo brawly. (*Retires.*)

(*Enter* GILDUS, *looking round.*)

GILDUS.—Clonval, are we alone? I cannot do't.
The King hath done me honour at this feast—
Hath given me earnest welcome as his guest;
And were I now to prove his base assassin,
Conscious ingratitude would make my heart
A scorching hell.

CLONVAL.—Think, Gildus, on thine oath!
Thou canst not live if thou forego this deed.
Fate hath decreed thee for thy country's saviour.
Thou hear'st how Malcolm ridicules our laws,
And intimates his wish to root them out:
Let such vile purpose whet thy dagger's point—
Our country's gods shall consecrate the deed.

GILDUS.—Then if the gods stay not our bloody purpose,
The murd'rous hand that strikes brave Malcolm down
Shall plunge the fatal dagger in this breast.
Again let me entreat thee, let us fly!

CLONVAL.—Fly!—whither—and for what?—to leave our names
To aftertimes as fools who sacrificed
Our matrons, maidens, children, and religion

To please the Saxon churls and this boy-king?
By all that's sacred, thou shalt not stir hence
Till thou hast shed King Malcolm's blood or mine.

GILDUS.—Well, take thy dagger and strike through my heart,
That beats so wildly 'gainst its prison bars.
I cannot do the deed.

CLONVAL.— If not to-night,
To-morrow in the forest at the chase
Keep near the King—together thread the woods;
Let Malcolm be the game thou reck'st to strike.

GILDUS (*despondingly*).—Ah me! there's no escape! Urged on by fate,
I feel this arm is doomed to strike a blow
That hence shall Scotland fill with direst woe.

(*Exeunt* GILDUS *and* CLONVAL.)

(*Enter* CARRON.)

CARRON.—The devil o' the like o' that I ever heard! Odd, very odd, that a stranger like me should have been thrown into the way of such important information. The old greybeard scoundrel! how shall I thwart his design? Let me see. There's no danger to-night. In the morning I shall take care that the King has timely warning of the kind intention of the rascally knaves.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Forest of Lothian.*

Sounds of hunting-horns and baying of stag-hounds.

(*Enter* KING, GILDUS, *and* ATTENDANTS *from the chase.*)

MALCOLM.—Heap high those antlered trophies of the chase.
The sport's exciting, and the keen fresh air
That sweeps the boughs of this primeval forest
Imparts new vigour to our firm-knit frames.
Now shall we beat the wood afoot in pairs,
And fearless seek the fierce and savage boar.
Brave Gildus, thou and I shall forth together;
Ere now we've fought abreast in battle-field—
Let's prove our prowess in this sylvan sport.

GILDUS (*starting*).—Pardon, my liege, such honour were too high
For one so humble. Let the noble Steward
Who waits close by here be your meet companion.

MALCOLM.—The noble Steward have we always with us,
But thou'rt a truant from our camp and court,
And we have pressing matter for thine ear;
So come at once.
GILDUS (*agitated*).—My liege, I wait your pleasure.
(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.—*Another part of the Forest of Lothian.*

(*Enter* MALCOLM *and* GILDUS. *Storm rises.*)

MALCOLM.—Behold, what sudden change! The murky wood
Grows dark and darker, while the angry wind
Expends its fury on the bending boughs,
That, shivering, howl and murmur out their moan;
The mountain-torrent brawls with maddening din,
The lowering clouds flit fleetly o'er the sky,
And nature seems to shrink with secret horror,
Appalled by that which I would fain unfold.
GILDUS (*startled*).—Hah! Is there mystic bond of sympathy
Between high heaven and its vicegerent here,

That darkness thus should mingle with thy speech?
Unveil thy meaning to thy servant's ear.

MALCOLM.—Gildus, thou'rt brave, and once I thought thee true.
Gildus, thou'rt bold, and still I'd think thee honest,
And when thou hear'st that heartless treachery
Hath hatched a plot to rob us of our life,
Thou'lt aid us, doubtless, with thy word and counsel
To drag to light this foul conspiracy.
Such is the game we hither came to seek.
See ye the traitor? He is close at hand.

GILDUS.—Pardon, my liege. Vouchsafe to speak more plain.
None else are present save thyself and me.

MALCOLM.—Then turn thy vision full upon thyself;
Open the portals of thine own dark soul,
And there thou'lt find the traitor who'd betray
The King who honoured, loved, and trusted him.
Fie on thee, Gildus!—fie! There's mettle in thee,—
Thou hast thy weapon, and we are alone;
Now meet thy King in fair and open fight—
Draw, traitor, draw, and Heaven defend the right!

GILDUS (*drawing his sword, kneels, and presents it to the* KING).—Within this bosom sheathe this trait'rous blade,—

Let forth the coward blood that downs the heart
Of him whose country brands him as her foe
For love he bears to thee. Death at thy hands
Were doubly welcome, now the odious task
Forced sternly on him is made known to thee,
Though Gildus never could have done the deed.

MALCOLM.—Forced on thee, Gildus! Quick,—explain thyself,—
Tell me the authors of this dire design,
And thou shalt pass unscathed. That poor old priest,
Whose auguries we scorned, whose threats despised,
Is guarded close. He and thy neighbour chiefs
Have urged thee to this deed. They love me not.

GILDUS.—Thou'st guessed aright, my liege; yet ne'er shall I,
To save myself, involve good men in trouble,
Who err from ill-judged zeal for ancient rites,
And think thy life a needful sacrifice
To please the gods who watch o'er Scotland's weal.

MALCOLM.—Such groundless prejudice must be removed;
Those foolish rites must be at once put down;
We'll send some messenger of truth and peace,
Who'll teach the beauties of the Christian faith,
And make true subjects of thy countrymen.

Meanwhile, put up thy sword. Next time 'tis drawn,
If need should be, 'twill be in our defence;
And soon your mountains shall with welcome ring,
While grey-beard chieftains hail their rightful King.

(*Alarm in the distance. Clashing of swords heard.*)

MALCOLM.—Ha! what unseemly sounds of strife are these?
Gildus, here's work may test thy loyal valour.

GILDUS.—Lead on, my liege; thy servant longs to prove
By deeds his grateful, his devoted love. (*Exeunt.*)

(*The storm increases. Partial darkness. At one side enters* TOSTI, *at opposite side* CARRON. *They run against each other.* TOSTI *rolls over.*)

CARRON.—Who the devil art thou, man, with thine eyes shut? Wear'st thou them behind, that thou canst not look before thee? Verily, thou shouldst imitate the crab, and walk backwards.

TOSTI.—Oh, my poor bones! Oh, my poor neck! Certes, I should have been covered with shells like a crab to have stood against such a shock. Verily, thou must be made of stone. What will become of me? Look before thee, quothee! One would require to look both before and behind him—ay, and on either

side too, to find his way here. This forest seems peopled with devils. Why came I here? Why left I merry England? Oh, Saint Eldreda, I never knew that I was a fool till now!

CARRON.—Well, when a man sees his folly, there's hopes that he may mend. A fool—and from England! One can scarce expect a wise man from that mad country. What's your errand here, sirrah?

TOSTI (*hums*).—A foolish errand, you may swear,

Oh dear! oh dear!
Seeking grace from royal ear,
Oh dear! oh dear!
Soon poor folly's knell may ring,
Never shall he find the King;
O'er his bier the owl shall sing,
Oh dear! oh dear!

CARRON.—The King! ha! ha! ha! What message hast thou for the royal ear? State secrets, I'll warrant me. Nothing less would justify sending such an ambassador from the English court, eh?

TOSTI.—Marry, thou guessest truly, and art a shrewd knave for a Scot. Wilt thou follow folly, and wear motley? Folly will store thee with wealth and wisdom, if thou wilt herald the ambassador of the King of England to the presence of the King of Scotland.

CARRON.—Art thou in sober earnest, sirrah?

TOSTI.—Ay, marry; folly is always sober and in earnest. Mirth dwells with wisdom, sadness with folly. Fools are witless, and wise men only have wit. Where there is no wit, there can be no mirth; therefore fools always wear long faces.

CARRON.—Ha! ha! ha! Then it follows that all who wear long faces are fools, and that the only true wisdom is to laugh and be merry. Good sound philosophy, faith, fool!

TOSTI.—Ay, sounder than thy wits, I warrant thee; but come, canst thou help me to speech of the King? There's life and death on my errand to Malcolm Canmore.

CARRON.—Out on your trifling, fool! Tell me its purport; pray be brief.

TOSTI.—Brief as thy wit. The lamb's in the fox's jaws. The bird's caught and caged. Edgar Atheling, my king, seeking sanctuary from Malcolm Canmore, thy king, has been seized in the forest hard by here by his Norman pursuers.

CARRON.—Out on your trifling again, I say. Come, show that a fool can fight. Draw your weapon and follow me—we'll soon set the forest a-fire.

(CARRON *blows horn, and exit.* TOSTI *follows in the direction taken by the* KING.)

SCENE III.—*The Forest of Lothian.*

(EDGAR, AGATHA, *and* MARGARET *prisoners in the hands of* FITZOSBORNE *and* NORMANS.)

FITZOSBORNE.—Your pardon, ladies, and thine also, Prince,—
To horse, to horse! the day wears on apace,
And we must see fair England's face to-morrow.
William the Norman waits our coming there,
To shower princely gifts and favours on you.

AGATHA.—Let me beseech thee, leave my children here;
One sacrifice may serve thy ruthless master.
Lead me to death, but spare, oh, spare my children!

EDGAR.—Nay, mother, mine alone the life he seeks,
And I shall go alone to meet my fate.
Though from my hand a royal sceptre's wrenched,
I change an earthly for a heavenly crown,—
Great is the glory, greater still the gain.
Norman, lead on;—I'll follow thee to death,
But leave my mother and my sister here—
They'll find a friend who can and will protect them.

MARGARET.—Never, dear brother, shall we separate;
We've lived till now together, and each hour

But serves to bind us closer to each other,—
Death, death itself alone can e'er divide us.

FITZOSBORNE.—Then you shall go together, and shall be
Most gently treated. As my orders bear,
King William brimful is of grace and kindness:
You'll find him friendly, frank, and generous,
And most unworthy your foul suspicions.

(*Enter* TOSTI, *singing.*)

Give a thief your sword,
Won't he have your purse, too?
Bless the Norman Lord!
Won't you have his curse, too?
Crown the Norman King,
Kneel before his throne, too;
Bear his heavy ring,—
Won't he make you groan, too?

FITZOSBORNE.—Hilloa, thou knave! what trait'rous rhyme is this
Thou dar'st to utter? Soldiers, bind him fast.

TOSTI.—Nay, you must catch your fish before you cook 'em. I carry my flesh-hook here, and mean to spit a Norman for dinner. (*Draws his sword.*)

(*Enter* MALCOLM, GILDUS, CARRON, *&c., who seize and disarm the* NORMANS.)

MALCOLM.—How now, ye Norman wolves! how feel ye now,
Caught in the meshes of your own vile snare?
Shame on ye thus to lay your ruffian hands
Upon such beauty, grace, and dignity!
Have the rude knaves conveyed to high Dunedin,
There to remain till we have fixed their doom.
Your pardon, ladies, for this rude intrusion;
A rough reception you have met with here,
Within the realm whose monarch owes his crown
To the kind friendship of the sainted Edward.

AGATHA.—And ne'er was Edward's bounty so repaid.
His sainted spirit must have hovered near;
How else couldst thou have come so opportune
To succour thus his helpless progeny?

MALCOLM.—Your faithful servant found us in the forest,
And told us your mischance. We sped to aid you,
And, as we came, heard of the Norman conquest.
Saxon and Scot must join in friendly league
To drive the robbers far from Albion's shore,
And place thee, Edgar, on the English throne.

EDGAR.—Ah, Malcolm! thou remind'st me of the time
When thou and I would play the part of kings
With toyish sceptres, and with mimic crowns,

While good St Edward eyed our pranks, and said,
The time would come we'd find such game no play.

MALCOLM.—Ay, and thy little sister Margaret
Would shake her little head with serious air,
And bid us mind our books and say our prayers.

MARGARET.—Ay, and would proffer the same counsel still,
Had she the same young madcaps to advise;
But Malcolm Canmore, Scotland's mighty King,
Must look to wiser heads than hers for counsel.

MALCOLM.—Hereafter shall we talk this matter o'er;
Meantime, fair princess, let me lead thee where
Thy palfrey waits impatient for its load.
Edgar, thy mother needs thy special care:
In good time shall we reach Dunfermline Palace,
Where you shall find a welcome and a home.

(*Exeunt all but* CARRON *and* TOSTI. CARRON *is following the* KING, EDGAR, *&c., preceding* TOSTI, *who pulls him back by the arm.*)

TOSTI.—How long hast thou been at court, friend?

CARRON.—Not long enough to have become a courtier.

TOSTI.—Thou confessest thy ignorance, therefore there's hope of thee; and therefore shall I enlighten thee, seeing that I have long been a court luminary.

CARRON.—Indeed! then the court must have been brilliantly illuminated.

TOSTI.—Ay, marry! and so shalt thou by-and-by. I love thee, I say, and shall instruct thee. Who so well qualified as I, who have been a courtier from my cradle? My father was court-fool, and I succeeded him. Harold was King of England, and Edgar should have succeeded him; but a crown is not so easy kept as a cap and bells, and the King and the fool are now wandering houseless together.

(*Sings.*)

Oh, well-and-a-day, when the crown's away,
The king mopes melancholy;
But bells they shall ring, with a high dong-ding,
In cap of merry folly.
With a bite for a buff, and a swig for a blow,
Merrily, cheerily, on we go.

Think'st thou, will Malcolm give Edgar a cordial welcome?

CARRON.—Ay, that he will, I'll be sworn; and thou, being the newest comer, shalt have my protection—so take courage, and follow me.

TOSTI.—Now, then, in return for thy kindness, shall I give thee a practical lesson? (*Walks on.*) Follow

thou me! In court processions, strangers always take precedence.

CARRON (*slapping* TOSTI *on the shoulder*).—Ha! ha! ha! You are a merry rogue, a witty knave; and I, being in search of mirth and wit, adopt thee as my leader. Lead on! (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE IV.—*Dunfermline Palace Courtyard.*

(*Enter* MALCOLM, EDGAR, AGATHA, *and* MARGARET.)

MALCOLM.—Welcome, dear friends; we shall not long delay
In starting on our purposed expedition
To free your country from a foreign yoke,
And place thee, Edgar, on St Edward's throne.

EDGAR.—We feel assured you make our cause your own,
And in your hands we leave our destiny.

AGATHA.—Heaven help our righteous cause, and speed the day
When native valour, backed by native skill,
Shall free the realm from the usurper's power,
And give us back our regal dignity!

MARGARET.—Alas, dear mother! dark's the path to power—
Dear, dear the conquest gained at such a price.
The blood of thousands poured upon the plain
Is ill atoned for by so poor a gain.

EDGAR.—Sweet sister, gentle minister of peace!
'Tis meet thy nature should abhor such scenes,
Yet there are times when war is justified.
Dear mother, thou'rt fatigued, thou'lt rest within:
We'll leave good Malcolm here to plead our cause.

(*Walks away with* AGATHA, *leaving* MARGARET *with* MALCOLM.)

MALCOLM.—Such themes, fair princess, suit not with thy nature,
And therefore shall not mar our converse now.
Oh, let me rather urge a gentler theme,
And tell thee how thou'rt shrined within my soul!—
How since we met in childhood's happy years
Thy image, like a star, hath lit my path;
And now thou comest, the minister of peace,
Showing rude war his foul deformity:
Then, oh, sweet saint, complete thy peaceful conquest!
Let me aspire to win thy heart and hand,
And with thy presence grace the Scottish throne.

MARGARET.—Alas, my lord! the outcast Margaret
Is no fit mate for Malcolm, King of Scotland.
MALCOLM.—Malcolm had ne'er been King but for thy sire.
With Edward's aid Macbeth was overcome,
And Scotland freed from a usurper's thrall:
Thou'lt free poor Scotland from a sterner tyrant,
If with thy counsel she is weaned from war.
Let me conjure thee, then, by all that's sacred,
To aid the cause of mercy and of love;—
Let love's fond haste excuse my pressing speech,
And let me woo thee, dearest, for my queen.
MARGARET.—The times are not in harmony with love,
And courtly pomp is alien to my nature.
Fain would I shun the glare of rank and fashion,
And share the joys and sorrows of the lowly;
Fain would I shun the din of busy crowds,
And stray amid the paths of solitude,
Where silent meditation ranges free,
To worship nature in her primal beauty.
MALCOLM.—Then hast thou endless sources of enjoyment
Amid our craggy hills and rocky dells,—
The mountain winds, swelling in joyous song,
The streams careering o'er their pebbly beds,

With pleasing melodies, shall charm thine ear;
The misty clouds that shroud our mountain-tops,
Investing nature with a mystic grandeur,
Shall raise thy soul to lofty contemplation;
While in the still seclusion of our glens
Thou'lt find repose twin-sister to devotion;
And thou shalt be the seraph whose soft strains
Shall soothe them all to happiness and peace.

MARGARET.—Thy gen'rous sentiments and friendly welcome
Affect me deeply. If so be thou deem'st
The humble Margaret a fitting mate,
This is no time for coyish maiden airs—
Thou hast her leave to ask her hand from those
Whom love and duty call her to obey. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE V.—*A State-apartment in Dunfermline Palace.*

(*Enter* MALCOLM, MARGARET, EDGAR, GILDUS, CARRON, TOSTI, *&c.*)

MALCOLM.—Carron, have Clonval now conducted hither.
Nay, start not, Gildus, we shall keep thee free.

(*Enter* CLONVAL, *guarded.*)

Old man, we seek to know what cause hath led thee
To urge thy countrymen with trait'rous arm
To shed his blood who never injured thee?

CLONVAL.—Because, proud King, thou hast enthralled thy country,
Estranged the people from their country's gods,
Destroyed their altars, set aside old rites,
And introduced new codes of laws and morals;
Raising thy dauntless front in towering pride,
As thou alone wert Heaven's vicegerent here;—
Rash youth, the gods shall hurl their vengeance on thee,
And bless the patriot who lays thee low.

MARGARET.—Hush! canst thou, minstrel, look upon the sky,
So full of beauty and serene repose,
Or gaze upon the green and tranquil earth,
And think that He who gave these beauties birth
Would bless the man who sheds his fellow's blood?

CLONVAL.—Nay, but the God who guards my country's weal
Directs the thunderbolt and guides the storm,
Dwells in the mist that overhangs the mountain,
His palace reared of clouds impenetrable.
The southern god basks drowsing in the sun,
The northern Thor lies cradled in the tempest.

MARGARET.—Alas! thy speech proclaims thine utter darkness.

The God who rules the storm governs the calm,
But love is still His highest attribute.
He preaches peace to all; His text is love,
And having died for us, He'd have us live
To honour Him, and love and bless each other.
This the religion of thy Christian King—
Let's hear, proud priest, the doctrines that thou teachest.

CLONVAL.—Destruction is the penalty of guilt—
Revenge is ever grateful to the wronged,
And must be grateful to the mighty Thor,
Whose rites and mysteries have been condemned—
Whose priests and worshippers have been insulted.
Stern judgment hath the majesty of might,
And is an attribute of him I worship.

MARGARET.—He whom we worship is the God of Truth,
Who cannot look on guilt without abhorrence;
Yet He hath had such mercy on our race,
That by His priceless blood we are redeemed:
This is the door by which we enter heaven,—
Tis open now to thee—to all the world.

CLONVAL (*whose countenance has been gradually assuming a milder expression, now kneels down, and, clasping his hands together, exclaims*)—

Speak on, speak on, bright saint; the veil of darkness
Hath fallen from my eyes, and gentleness
Now warms with genial glow my throbbing breast;
Mine eyes were never dimmed with tears before.
Lead me to death, I merit well my fate,
But let me know the truth before I die.

MALCOLM.—Nay, thou shalt live and be instructed in
The doctrines of our pure and holy faith.

CLONVAL.—Then let me linger by this angel here
Till the bright sun break fully on my sight.
An old man tottering on the dark grave's brink,
Would fain teach truth to those he taught in error.

MARGARET.—Then thou shalt be my pupil. I'll instruct
And help thee onward in thy Christian course.

(*The trumpets sounds outside. Enter a* HERALD.)

HERALD.—William the King, and Conqueror of England,
By me, his servant, specially complains
That Malcolm Canmore, King of Scotland, hath
Received within his realm as refugees
Prince Edgar, with his mother and his sister,
With hordes of disaffected Saxons, who
Still aim to sow dissension through the land.
The said King William, therefore, doth demand

That thou no longer give such traitors shelter ;
And if this point is not conceded now,
War is proclaimed with Scotland from this hour.

MALCOLM.—Speed to thy master—tell him Malcolm Canmore
Defies alike his anger and his power.
Our court is ever open to our friends—
Our sword is ready to avenge their wrongs.
We will not wait King William's coming hither,
But hasten forth to meet him in the field,
And with God's aid place Edgar on the throne.
This message Malcolm Canmore sends to William—
See that thou bear it faithfully and truly.

HERALD.—I shall, my lord.

TOSTI (*steps forward*).—Ah, and wilt thou carry to a knave a fool's rhyme? 'Tis an old burden. Thou canst sing it to the old fox, thy master.

(*Sings.*)

The fox was a sly old sinner,
And he waxed still thinner and thinner,
For the pretty little lamb
Went wandering with its dam,
And the fox couldn't have him for dinner.

MALCOLM (*to* TOSTI).—Cease, sirrah! this is no time for fooling.

(*To* HERALD).—Speed with our message—we will follow closely. (*Exit* HERALD.)

(*To* ATTENDANT.)—Come, sir, to horse, and bear thou our commands

To Steward and Macduff, to bring their forces,
And meet us two days hence in Lothian Forest.
Gildus and Carron, pray bestir yourselves,
For on this great and glorious enterprise,
One heart, one soul, must animate all Scotland.

CARRON.—I'll do what man can, for my own part, and endeavour to excite others by my example.

GILDUS.—The test of my sincerity shall be
The zeal with which I labour in this work.
From Grampian's summits warriors shall I bring
To place on England's throne her lawful King.

EDGAR.—Dear friends, your kindness we can ne'er repay—
Words cannot speak the feelings of our heart;
Therefore in silence shall we cherish them,
Believing that at no far distant day
We may have power to proffer some return.

MALCOLM.—Then, gallant warriors, at once farewell!
In two days we shall meet in Lothian Forest,
Whence we shall seek our nighest way to England.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Norman Encampment, Northumberland. The King's Tent.*

WILLIAM.—Strange that our messenger hath not returned
From Scotland. Had he used his wonted speed,
He ought to have been here. But lo, he comes!
(*Enter* HERALD.)
Well, sir, what answer bring you to our message?

HERALD.—Pardon, my liege; while I rehearsed your message,
Stern Malcolm curled his lips in scornful mood,
And bade me speed to give you his defiance,
And say he would not wait your coming there,
But would be here to meet you front to front,
And with God's help place Edgar on the throne.

WILLIAM.—What! brave us in the land our arms have won?

He'll make and unmake sovereigns at his will.
Insolent braggart! he shall dearly rue
That e'er he dared to meet us as a foe.
Come, soldiers, get you ready for the march—
Onward to meet this noisy, vaunting Scot.
God wot, we've might to win another kingdom.
Low as proud Harold shall we Malcolm lay,
And o'er these lands hold undivided sway. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.—*Scottish Encampment on the Banks of the Alne.*)

(Edgar, Malcolm, Steward, Gildus, *&c.*)

Malcolm.—Carron hath gained fresh laurels for his brow,
And hath forestalled us, leaving us no share
Of this day's glory. Swift and prompt his movements,
And rapid the success that followed them—
He led his followers to the flooded stream
That swept along in torrents fierce and deep,
And when the standard-bearer hung aback,
Scared by the gleaming blaze of Norman armour,

Brave Carron seized the banner from his grasp,
Waving it proudly o'er his towering form,
Then rushed into the stream—the soldiers followed,
And the strong Normans, struck with sudden terror,
Fled in dismay before their conquerors.

STEWARD.—Here comes the hero!

(*Enter* CARRON.)

STEWARD.— Welcome, gallant Carron;
Thou marchest onward with a giant's pace.

MALCOLM.—Thrice welcome, gallant Carron! Treble thanks,—
Hereafter we'll requite thy services
With more substantial proofs of gratitude.

CARRON.—'Tis time enough to pay the workman when his labour is completed. Your grace has more than recompensed me already for what I have done. As for the victory won this day, I reckon little of it, seeing it was won without fighting. Rely on it, there's harder work in store for us, ere we make much more way through bonny England.

EDGAR.—We hail this as an omen of success,
And feel assured at every onward step
Our ranks shall swell with loyal Saxon heroes,
Till England's might shall rise in spring-tide floods,
And sweep the Norman from his rock-girt isle.

MALCOLM.—Then Onward be the word—we'll seek
the field
Where Scotland's King may fall, but shall not yield.
(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III.—*Saxon Abbey in flames.*

(*Enter* NORMAN COMMANDER *and* SOLDIERS.)

COMMANDER.—Slay, burn, exterminate the rebel race
Who dare to call the Saxon Edgar King!
This is the abbey where he lived and prayed,
And, half a monk, made monks of all around him.
These monkish Saxons hourly pray to Heaven
For vengeance on their Norman conquerors;
But we shall leave their dwellings, folds, and fields
A testimony by their desolation
Of Norman vengeance and of Norman power.

(*Alarm and trumpets without. Enter* CARRON *and* SCOTTISH SOLDIERS.)

CARRON.—This way, ye coward knaves! why oppress the poor? Why destroy the bounties of Providence? Why make war against women and children? This way, an' ye be men. Here are bucklers that shall try

the temper of your blades. Saxons, your Prince is at hand. On with me, then, and strike for Edgar, King of England.

(*Fight. Combat between* CARRON *and* NORMAN COMMANDER. *Exeunt fighting.*

Alarm. Trumpet. Enter MALCOLM, EDGAR, STEWARD, *and* SOLDIERS. *A* SCOTTISH SOLDIER *rushes forward, alarmed and excited.*)

MALCOLM.—Well, sirrah, wherefore wearest thou such a look
Of craven terror? What alarms thee, say?

SOLDIER.—Pardon, your grace, we were fighting, and our commander, the brave Carron, is still fighting as man never fought before; but the Saxons who first joined us have fled, and I came to implore your grace to send him some aid.

STEWARD.—My liege, allow me and my followers
To join brave Carron in his enterprise:
My soldiers all are longing for the fray,
And my good sword rusts idly by my side.

MALCOLM.—Carron's impetuosity hath led
Him prematurely thus to take the field.
It were a just and proper punishment
To leave him to his fate; yet he is brave,
So to his rescue, Steward, and, if need,

Ourselves shall follow—though we'd rather wait
To meet Duke William at his army's head.
He cannot now be distant from us far.

(*Alarm.* STEWARD *and* SOLDIERS *rush out. Noise of fighting.* STEWARD'S *voice, calling, heard from behind scenes.*)

Back, soldiers, back! The Normans fly before him;
We must not lessen, nor divide his glory.

(STEWARD *enters.*)

MALCOLM.—Good Steward, we o'erheard thy gen'rous speech,
And learn with joy that Carron hath prevailed;
Let's on to meet him.

EDGAR.— And as we approach,
Still higher swell our breasts with hope of success.
The cause of truth and freedom must prevail,
And England shall be freed from foreign thrall.

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE IV.—*A Northumbrian Plain.*

Enter MARGARET, *veiled, and* TOSTI, *as if from a journey.*

MARGARET.—Have I done more than all beseems my sex,

With none save this poor faithful witling Tosti,
To venture thus amid these hostile camps,
Alas! with little prospect of success,
In my attempt to stay this cruel war,
And save my dearest friends from chance of danger?
In Edgar's cause hath Malcolm ventured all,
And if he falls his blood's on Edgar's head;
Therefore the zeal which urges me to seek
By words of peace to soothe this burly Norman.
Now, Tosti, are we near our journey's end?

Tosti.—I'm at mine, Princess, and thou'lt soon be at thine. Thou may'st smell the Norman by his burnings, as our nags must have done, or they wouldn't have plunged in the manner they did. That old nag of mine nearly unhorsed me, and he might have been right; for, after all, what right has an ass to bestride a horse? And am I not an ass in a lion's skin, when I attempt to guide and protect thee? Oh dear! verily, I shall down on my all-fours, and take to grazing. Poor Tosti's a-weary and a-hungry.

Margaret.—Pardon me, Tosti; in my earnestness
I had forgot thy wants. Take thou refreshment,
And point me out my way to William's camp.

Tosti.—Lay thy head to thy left shoulder, thus—peep over that furze on the knoll there: seest those

blood-red striped tents flapping there with a black banner flying? There squats the black wolf of Normandy. But, dearest Princess, bethink thee of the peril of thy enterprise, and rather let us go together to our friends, whose banners thou seest waving together on the other side there.

MARGARET.—Nay, Tosti, thou must wait thee here alone;
Alone I go upon my enterprise.
To Norman chivalry I'll make appeal,
And shall, at least, gain audience of the King.
If I should fail, then I'll return to thee.
Should I succeed, and am not here by noon,
Come straight to Malcolm's camp; I'll meet thee there,
Secure, I trust, in bonds of love and peace.—(*Exeunt separately.*)

SCENE V.—*Norman Encampment. The King's Tent.* WILLIAM *and* OFFICERS.

WILLIAM.—We'll waste no more of our brave army's strength
On such mean fights, such paltry skirmishes.
These Scots do match us in this petty warfare;
Nay, are our masters. But i' th' ordered field

We'll cause them own the Norman mastery.
(*To* Officers.) Go, get your men locked close in thick array,
March with them to the ground we pointed out,
Keep those of weighty armour on the plain,
And let the archers occupy the hill.
The Norman bow hath twenty times the power
Of Scottish spear.

(*Enter* Messenger.)

Messenger.— My liege, a lady veiled
Solicits entrance to your royal presence.

William.—Admit her instantly. Strange time and place
For lady visitors. (*To* Officers.) Pray you retire,
The object of her visit may be secret. (*Exeunt* Officers.)
Ha! here she comes. (*Enter* Margaret.)
Fair madam, may we beg you
To let us know the purport of that mission
To which we owe this unexpected honour?

Margaret.—My mission, mighty King, is one of peace.
I kneel a humble suppliant at thy feet
For peace to this distracted, bleeding country.

William.—An't please thee, lady, hie to Malcolm's camp,

Counsel the rebels there to loyalty:
'Tis they, not we, disturb the country's peace.
We're here to curb rebellion, and maintain
The honour of our high and hard-won fame.

MARGARET.—Thy valour, King, the world proclaims aloud;
Thy prowess is attested by thy conquests;
But there are attributes more kingly still
Would add a greater lustre to thy name.
Stern war, my lord, is like the angry blast
That sweeps with fury o'er the wintry plain;
But peace and gentleness are genial dews,
Nursing the flow'rets of the summer fields.

WILLIAM.—We sought not war, fair lady; we're in arms
To quell rebellion, and protect our subjects
From the aggression of these savage Scots,
Who, while professing to assist the Saxon,
But seek to wrench our crown and sceptre from us.

MARGARET.—Was not thine own course similar? and canst
Thou blame in others what thyself hast done?
Didst thou not wrong a prince, whose gentle nature
Was much too gentle for this rough-work world?
Hast thou not ta'en from him his crown and kingdom,

And shed much blood to make thy seat secure?
And this thou call'st the curbing of rebellion!
Is't not the promptings rather of ambition?

WILLIAM.—Fair saint, we took thee not for our confessor,
But were we now confessing, we'd maintain
That England's royal crown was forced upon us.
That gentle Edgar thou hast praised so highly,
Was more ambitious to play priest than king.

MARGARET.—And if he were so now, wouldst thou not rather
Meet him as friend than foe? Secured from violence,
With revenues befitting his high rank,
His wishes might be fully satisfied.
Brave Malcolm is his true and faithful friend,
And hath no wish that is not strictly his.

WILLIAM.—God wot, there's reason in thy speech, fair lady;
But how could we the matter set afoot,
Or gain assurance of desired result?

MARGARET (*removing her veil*).—
The tenor of my speech may vouch its truth.
But, on the honour of a Princess, I,
The sister of young Edgar Atheling,
Assure thee of success. Seek out my brother,

Seek conference with him and Malcolm Canmore;
Proffer them friendship in sincerity,
And in sincerity they'll be thy friends.

WILLIAM.—Fair Princess, there is wisdom in thy counsel,
And we consent to yield us to thy guidance,
Praying that Heaven may aid thy good intent,
And all thy gentle wishes be attained.

(*Exeunt together.*)

SCENE VI.—*Malcolm's Camp.*

Manent, MALCOLM, EDGAR, STEWARD, CARRON, GILDUS, *&c.*

MALCOLM.—Now shall we have our pith and courage tested;
The enemy is ranged in battle order.
Much skill is shown in choosing of their ground,
So we must mate them with like cautiousness,
And match them with like daring. What says Steward?

STEWARD.—My liege, I'd counsel that a chosen band
Should, under cover of the dusky night,
Ascend to rearward the acclivity

On which the Norman army is encamped ;
While we, with seeming earnestness, shall range
Our men upon the open plain in front.
Beguiled, the foe will think us easy prey,
And rush upon our ranks ; then on the heights,
In phalanx firm, shalt thou attack their rear,
And we shall have them wedged between us close ;
Then, hand to hand, the victory is ours.

MALCOLM.—Well counselled, gallant Steward. Daring Carron,
Thou shalt conduct the band to scale the heights ;
Edgar, thou and ourself shalt lead the van ;
Steward, take thou the right ; Gildus, the left ;
And may the God of battles be our shield.

(*Enter* HERALD.)

HERALD.—Before engaging in this deadly strife,
William, the soul of chivalry and honour,
Would conference hold with Malcolm, King of Scotland,
And purposes to visit thee in camp,
Attended only by his guard of honour.
He hath some overtures to make, which may
Convert the field of strife to one of peace.

EDGAR.—Dear Malcolm, let me pray thee give him audience ;
And if by aught this war can be avoided,

'Tis what my warmest aspirations aim at,
And would be trebly grateful to my heart.

MALCOLM.—Though such result seems almost hopeless, yet
We may not shun this meeting with the Norman,
And shall, upon the honour of our knighthood,
Assure him of safe ward and guidance thence.
Herald, convey this message to thy master.

(HERALD *sounds trumpet.*)

HERALD.—This will suffice, your Grace, to bring him hither;
He waits but some score bow-shots off.

MALCOLM.— Indeed,
There must be honour where there's so much courage.
His confidence we'll not abuse. He comes.

(*Enter* WILLIAM OF NORMANDY, *attended.*)

William of Normandy, we greet you well.
This visit we receive in friendly part;
To-morrow we may meet in other mood.

WILLIAM.—It may be so, but not if what we say
Find favour with you. We came here prepared
For death or victory, as God should will;
But through advising of a gentle spirit,
Are we induced to offer terms of peace.
More than enough of blood's already shed.

The quarrel still unsettled would remain,
Involving future ages in our broils.
Shall we go on? Have we your Grace's leave?

MALCOLM.—If what you purpose be in unison
With this your speech's tenor, it were well.
Pray you proceed—explain your views more fully.

WILLIAM.—We purpose to bestow on Edgar Atheling
Princely possessions and a princely fortune;
A lasting league with Malcolm, King of Scotland,
Securing to him broad Northumberland.
These are our terms. How seem they in your sight?

MALCOLM.—Speak, Edgar Atheling; the cause is thine.

EDGAR.—With eager gladness I accept the offer,
Resigning all pretensions to the throne
(For which, in sooth, I have but feeble longing),
And would entreat your friendship for each other.
William, I hail thee King of mighty England!
With Malcolm Canmore hence be thou united,
And peace and joy shall rest upon the land.

MALCOLM.—But by what miracle hath this event
Been brought about? What messenger from heaven
Hath wrought this wond'rous, this most happy change?

WILLIAM.—The messenger from heaven, who wrought this change,

Is still our guardian angel!

(*Enter* MARGARET *veiled.*)

But lo, she comes!

(WILLIAM *takes her hand; they converse apart.*)

MALCOLM.—That form, that air, recall to us, dear Edgar,
Thy beauteous sister. Yet it cannot be.
Her gentle orisons for our success
Will now be rising far, far distant, else
We could have sworn that dearest Margaret
And this fair advocate of peace were one.

WILLIAM.—Princes, unto this gentle maid we owe
This happy termination to our quarrel,
Her worth and beauty equal to her wisdom.
Malcolm, thou'st grown so much upon our love,
That we would fain cement our peaceful league
By this fair hand, with ample dower to grace it.

MALCOLM.—We deeply feel the honour you intend,
But must decline it, as our heart and hand
Are plighted to dear Edgar's beauteous sister,
Who waits our coming in Dunfermline Palace.

MARGARET (*coming forward*).—But if thy bride hath wearied for thy coming,
And played the truant from Dunfermline towers,
Seeking her plighted husband in the camp,

Planting amid the thorny fields of war
The peaceful emblem of the fragrant myrtle,
Shall the poor truant be forgiven, say?

MALCOLM (*embracing her*).—It is my soul's own treasure, 'tis my bride!

Speak on, speak on, these sounds thrill through my soul
Like heavenly music through the trembling air.
How cam'st thou hither, dearest? Who conducted
Thee safely through the bloody ranks of war?

TOSTI (*coming forward*).—How could she have come on such a wise mission, unless she had been led by folly? Wisdom can't lead folly, therefore it behoves folly to lead wisdom; and therefore it became me, who had led beauty to valour in Scotland, when valour had deserted beauty in Scotland, to bring beauty back to England in pursuit of valour. Therefore take a fool's advice. Let there be no more running away, till you run home to Scotland together, King and Queen, and master and mistress of poor folly, who has always been a courtier, and who can't live anywhere but in a royal mansion.

WILLIAM.—Nay, Tosti, thou shalt have thine ancient home

And all indulgence, wilt thou wend with us,
And with thy wit light up our foggy council!

TOSTI.—Nay, nay; Tosti feels thy kindness, but to

see a Norman seated on a Saxon throne would make him melancholy, and his old cap and bells would be idle and rusted.

(*Sings.*)

But his bells they shall ring,
With a hey jingle-jing:
His old cap anew shall be mended;
As he lilts a blythe lay
On this thrice-happy day,
When beauty and valour are blended,
Then round about, round about, merry ding-dong,
Life passes on with a sigh and a song.

WILLIAM.—Poor Tosti counsels well, and we would fain
Have all these treaties instant ratified;
And if in the adjoining abbey here
Fair Margaret would yield her kind consent
To have the ceremony now performed,
We'll be her sponsor at the happy bridal—
Earnest, we trust, of lasting happiness
Between all portions of the British Isles.

MALCOLM.—And if my urgent prayer can aught avail,
Let me implore this heavenly messenger,

Whose speech can thus convert the camp of war
Into a festival of love and peace,
Not to withhold from me one moment longer
The priceless treasure of thy peerless hand.

MARGARET.—I were unworthy thee and thy deserts,
Did I attempt to trifle with such feelings ;
Take thou this hand (*gives her right hand to William*)
(*Gives her left hand to Edgar*), and thou, dear brother,
this.
No hand I've now for thee, good Malcolm Canmore,
But at the altar thou may'st freely claim it,
With full assurance that both hand and heart
Devoted are to thee and dear "Auld Scotland."

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

SONG OF THE FOUR ELEMENTS.

FOR MUSIC.

Water.

Come wi' me, bairnie, and hear what the burn says,
Singing to itsel' in its ain bonny glen.
What's yon it blabs, as ower the grey scaur it plays;
What's yon it murmurs in the slee cookit den?
"A' the laughin' valleys round are nursed and fed by me,
And I'm aye lippin' fu', for I gather as I gie."

Light.

Come wi' me, bairnie, and see how the morning sun
Keeks, sleepy-e'ed, as he rises frae the sea;
Hark how he sings as he scatters the shadows dun,
Gauring fields and flowers bloom on mountain and lea:
"See how a' Nature's face is brightened up by me,
And I'm aye getting mair light, the mair light I gie."

Air.

Come wi' me, bairnie, and see yon wee siller cloud
  Floating a' alane in the blue simmer sky;
See how it spreads till the wind whistles wild and loud,
  Hark how the storm-song is soughin' far and high:
"Cauler air wafts health and strength to humble and
    to hie,
And I'm aye growing stronger, the mair strength I gie."

Earth.

Come wi' me, bairnie, for we are the yirth-clods,
  Vivified and nurtured by water, light, and air;
And we should aye ettle to nurse weel the wee pods
  That nestle in our breasts, seeking soft shelter there.
So let us join in genial love, and swell the melody,
The mair happiness we gain, the mair that we gie.

"WORK OUT YOUR AIN SALVATION."

A WORKING MAN'S SONG.

Work out your ain salvation, men, frae poverty and sin,
Frae God aboon you'll get the power, gin ye've the will to win;
Ne'er lippen to another arm to lift your heavy mell,—
You'll work your ain salvation out, by working for yoursel'.

The dour-browed frost o' selfishness is unco hard to thaw,
While vaunting Charity's purse-strings are often dreigh to draw;
And oh! the crust ye earn yoursel', though aiblins unco wee,
The harder ye hae wrought for't is the sweeter aye to pree.

Though mony trials come atween the cradle and the grave,
There's neither work nor trial but a manly heart may brave;
And health to work for wife and weans, and pay through life his way,
Is aye the greatest blessing that an honest man can hae.

For age and trouble when they come our sympathies are rife,
Yet independent earning brings an independent life;
And though our fate here, and ayont, we canna weel foretell,
We ken that Heaven aye helps the man wha strives to help himsel'.

THE ATOMS OF CREATION.

FOR MUSIC.

O ATOMS of creation, how wonderful you be,
Above, around, afar, or near, on earth or sky or sea!
Where every particle shows trace of good and wise design,
And every grateful heart is charmed with wisdom so divine.

Where'er you turn your raptured gaze, what radiant beauties rise!
The earth is gemmed with stars as bright as those that gem the skies;
Each speck of earth, each water-drop, encloses worlds we see—
O atoms of creation, how wonderful ye be!

And while we scan the sun and moon, and watch each
twinkling star,
Let's tend the atom-worlds us nigh, as well as those
afar;
In every nook and crevice, and in every bud and
bough,
Life teems in myriad forms, and shows creation all
aglow.

As Nature's God bestows alike his care on small and
great,
Prize every moment as an hour, nor on chance lingering
wait;
Work on! work on! nor pause, till from life's troubles
you are free—
O atoms of creation, how wonderful you be!

SYMPATHY.

FOR MUSIC.

JUST see the morning blink o' sun first kiss the budding rose,
How quickly the wee grateful flower wi' blushing beauty glows!
And list the robin in the dell, the lavrock in the sky,
A' welcome wi' their genial notes the glorious orb on high.

Just throw a wee bit cauld black coal into your ingle lowe,
And see how soon it sparkling gleams and shows its heart aglow:
So, when on earth we mingle wi' the genial and the true,
Each heart responds to heart, and life is happiness a' through.

Thus kindliness gets kindliness, and love aye kindles
love,
And man frae selfish aim is raised to aimings far above;
And lang or short's the time may be we hae to lin-
ger here,
'Tis sweet to mingle smile wi' smile, and mingle tear
wi' tear.

Oh sympathy, true sympathy, is wanted here below;
We ought to share our neighbour's joy, as weel's our
neighbour's woe;
If hand in hand, and foot to foot, we warsle up the
brae,
We'll clear a' clouds awa, and life will shine a sunny
day.

PARTING AND MEETING.

How sad to part from those we love,
And leave them in their lowly bed,
Were't not the light from heaven above
Which God hath o'er us kindly shed,
That chases cloudy grief away,
And opens an eternal day.

In all the ages of the earth,
In every race, in every clime,
This feeling comes with man at birth,
And still remains throughout all time;
And man must hold it true as dear,
When sent by Him who sends man here.

And oh! how much by Him matured,
Who came an erring world to save,

And to the pure in heart, assured
A glorious life beyond the grave,
Where, from all sin and sorrow free,
The pure are linked in purity.

Unto the pure all things are pure,
For God Himself is purity,
And nought impure can e'er endure
With Him through all eternity;
Then let us strive still more and more
To rise to Him all worlds adore.

OUTDOOR WORSHIP.

Seated beneath a rural porch,
  Clustered with glistening leaves and flowers,
Amid a universal Church,
  My soul asserts her mental powers;
And as I gaze around, above,
My heart expands with grateful love,

Lo, near me, in yon ancient pile,
  I see our fathers' skill displayed,
And marvel how in Scotland's isle,
  Where progress in all arts is made,
The preacher should not teach his flock
As Moses did from Horeb's rock.

Why, why, in such a day as this,
  When sunshine lights up every nook,

Should people sleep in church, and miss,
The lessons writ in Nature's book,
Read, as our Saviour wont to do,
When lilied fields He wandered through?

In spring, when flowers begin to bud,
And the bright sun breaks laughing through,
When young green leaves old brown boughs stud,
And nature all seems born anew,
We learn that nothing e'er can die,
And know our home is in the sky.

In summer, when the verdant fields
Are all arrayed in robes of green,
When every flower rich fragrance yields,
And every blade of grass is seen
Sparkling with heaven-sent drops of dew,
What beauties charm our raptured view!

In autumn, when with golden sheaves
Our fields are crowded far and near,
Though sighing boughs and browning leaves
Foreshadow winter cold and drear,
We grateful feel to Nature's Lord,
Who with such gifts our land hath stored.

Or wandering o'er the snow-wreathed moor,
When winter days are drear and cold,
We find in dwellings of the poor
Heart treasures far more prized than gold,
And though by death or famine tried,
They know for them the Saviour died.

Thus, through all seasons and all times,
God's power and goodness are displayed ;
Then do not let the church-bell chimes
Exhaust a day for worship made,
But wander forth by sea or shore,
To gaze, to wonder, and adore.

GLOAMING, NIGHT, AND MORNING.

Gloaming.

As the gloaming softly falls,
Who is this who gently calls
To my soul, "What are you doing—
Are you duty's path pursuing,
Are you soothing neighbours' sorrow,
Are you dreaming of to-morrow,
Dawdling, drowsing day by day,
Wasting all your time away,
Getting older, doing less,
Sinking into nothingness,
While the wisdom age should boast,
Is to thee for ever lost?"

Night.

'Mid the silent hours of night,
Gather round me visions bright;

Old and young are deftly blent,
In the aerial firmament;
Long-lost friends have come again,
Bringing memories in their train,
Sunbeams of youth's joyous days,
Lightening age's thickening haze,—
Till I see around, above,
Myriad traits of genial love;
And as night-clouds pass away,
Hope and Truth burst forth like day.

Morning.

'Mid the morning's brightening rays,
Quickly flies the murky haze;
Sunny skies now sparkle bright,
Birds are warbling with delight;
Flowers elate are gently springing,
Water, air, and earth are singing;
Every luxury is here,
That can make life sweet and dear,
Leading wondering eyes to see
What God does for you and me:
Then let us gaze and wonder still,
And muse His praise, and wait His will.

EARLY TRAINING.

Amid the city dense and dun,
In a small dingy room,
Where, save in summer days, the sun
Ne'er pierced the murky gloom,
An infant cried at early morn—
A father knew a son was born.

Thick crowded was the wynd and stair,
Hundreds of families dwelt there,
Industrious, honest, kind.
And at the birth of that small boy
There rose on high the voice of joy
Through all that stair and wynd.
The infant's parents were beloved
By all the neighbours round,
For many had their friendship proved,
And help in need had found.

Somewhat advanced in life were they,
And Heaven had given and ta'en away
Their former children: hence the joy
That welcomed home their infant boy.

The willing father laboured hard,
And found his labours' sweet reward
In happiness at home.
When you might hear in winter night
Him reading o'er with high delight
Full many a well-thumbed tome;
While wife and child would laugh or cry
To strange tales, while they listened;
Or when he raised their thoughts on high,
How bright their fond eyes glistened!
A kiss, a laugh, a dance, a song,
No winter night could e'er seem long.
A happy three in one were they,
Till death the father forced away.

Sweet sainted mother, o'er my cheek
The tears roll as thy graces meek
Arise to memory dear.

In death and sorrow's dark eclipse,
No murmur e'er escaped her lips;
She sighed but shed no tear.
And as her smile, in times of joy,
Shed radiance o'er her darling boy,
And cheered him in his play;
So now in time of woe she strove
To lead her orphan's thoughts above
To Him who was her stay.

The husband dead, she sewed for bread,
Yet she had always time to spare
To aid with kindly word and deed
All those oppressed with grief and care.
The parish minister, good soul,
Ere out the parish alms he'd dole,
Consulted her in every case,
And to his alms she added grace.
No aid she ever took or sought,
But toiled with honest pride and joy,
Delighted that her labour brought
Providing for her orphan boy.
Such was a Scottish mother's pride,
Who ere she begged would rather died.

On the first day of every week,
What crowds our little home would seek!
Folks marvelled much what brought them there:
Was it to join the pastor's prayer?
Was it his alms? was it his blessing
That made them all come thickly pressing?
Perhaps the one, perhaps the other,
Perhaps they both were sought together;
But in all weathers, foul or fair,
One thing is sure, the crowds came there.

The cripple and the blind in pairs,
  Came leading in each other;
Old land and ocean warriors
  Came each the other's brother,
And vagrants wandering far and near,
Came weekly for their pittance here.
An erring daughter whiles would come,
With downcast look, ashamed and dumb,
Whose weakness would no longer hide;
The neighbours' scoffing forced to bide,
But still the housewife's gentle hand
  And voice thus taught them all;
"Poor child! let those who think they stand,
  Take heed they do not fall."

And all around that neighbourhood
  The widow's son was loved—
His mother was so kind, so good,
  To him all hearts were moved;
And wanderers wild, and bed-rid old,
To him their life's adventures told,
  And filled his breast with joy,
And made him wish to wander too,
Such scenes as they described, to view.
  And so that stripling boy
Would saunter forth at early dawn,
O'er hill and dale, through glen and lawn,
  Feasting his raptured soul
With beauty, till with nature he
Had close and full affinity,
  Himself part of the whole;
And loved all flowers, and beasts, and things.
And with his boyish wanderings,
  The growing mind still grew,
Till all around, beneath, above,
To him was one vast scene of love,
  And beauty ever new—
Parts of a great and glorious whole,
The body of a mighty soul.

And in this medley college trained,
He ample store of knowledge gained
Of years and ages past.
Old soldiers fought their battles o'er—
Old sailors swagged, and felt once more
Tough men before the mast.
And through the tenements around,
Tall towering to the sky,
He wandered, and old grandames found
Who raised his wonder high,
Recounting mighty deeds of yore,
And humming ancient songs galore.

Stout beggar louns, who lived on lies,
Ne'er dared from him the truth disguise,
Or dodging with him try.
And gipsies who read stars to fools,
Taught him old Zoroaster's rules
Anent the glistening sky.
While old blind fiddlers, whose pet airs
Were jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
Taught him so well to tickle hairs,
He tickled hearts and heels.

And ballad-singers, whose blithe lays
Made dull dark streets to ring,
Were so delighted with his praise,
They taught him how to sing.
And thus the boy to manhood grew,
And thus the humble world he knew.

No marvel that a lad so trained,
Who had such ample knowledge gained
Of varied humble life,
Should aim in homely strains to tell
Of those dear scenes he loved so well,
With character so rife.
No marvel genial hearts should hail
Those scenes with glad surprise,
And thank the Muse who raised the veil,
And charmed their wond'ring eyes.

A SILVER RING.

My love, what happy day is this!
Have five-and-twenty years gone by
Since we were linked in mutual bliss
By Hymen's pure and holy tie—
That made thy love and beauty mine,
And made my love and duty thine?

How proud was I of my wee hame
When first I saw it graced by thee,
And all my friends and cronies came
And joined us in our genial glee;
While thy sweet smile and silvery voice
Made every welcome guest rejoice.

It was a humble but-and-ben,
Yet in that ben I've often met

With as good chields and trusty men
As any that I meet with yet;
And though whiles closely jammed together,
Like flints, when struck, they kindled ither.

And when thou placed within my arms
The infant image of thysel',
How proudly that dear daughter's charms
Made the fond father's bosom swell;
And as his treasures both he prest,
What floods of love flowed through his breast!

And other flowers on love's tree grew,
And filled our home with joyous gladness,
Till Heaven some beauteous buds withdrew
And changed our joy to gloomy sadness;
But on Hope's wing Faith soared on high,
And saw those buds bloom in the sky.

Thou wert my only source of song—
In all my thoughts thou ever wert;
Even 'mid devotion, deep and strong,
Thou ever hadst the largest part;
And bright and sunny all became
Beneath thy sway, my winsome dame.

And all were pleased, and I was proud,
To lead you from the pent-up town,
And place you far from noisy crowd
In a sweet cottage of your own;
Where, tended like my friends, thy flowers
Might grace the Meadows' leafy bowers.

'Mid joy and grief, years twenty-five,
Like one short day, have o'er us flown,
And many loving friends survive,
Though many dearly loved have gone;
But memory still holds converse sweet
With many that we long to meet.

I'm told, when five-and-twenty years
Two wedded hearts have felt as one,
And conquered all life's cares and fears,
And hope still long to linger on:
A silver ring the faithful wife
Should wear, the emblem of her life.

Then wear thou this, my own dear love,
So gently and so nobly won;

And may our future days but prove
As happy as the years now gone:
My harp may boast no silver string,
My soul is in this silver ring.

ODE TO MY THIRTY-THIRD MARRIAGE-DAY.

This is a day I ne'er forget;
And oh it was a happy day—
That day I bore my virgin pet
From her kind loving friends away;
And when she sank upon my breast,
We owned, we felt, we both were blest.

Now three-and-thirty years have fled,
Since she first nestled in my arms;
And oh what lustre has she shed
Around me with her genial charms!
She won my friends both far and near,
To prize her high, and hold her dear.

I need not mourn our darlings gone—
What earth has lost, kind heaven hath won;

But when my soul felt sad and lone,
She shone upon me like a sun,
And showed me an eternal day,
Where life and love know no decay.

And those now left us clustered near—
See how their hearts speak in their eyes,
While gazing on their mother dear,
Their infant days to memory rise,
When she first showered on them her love,
And raised their thoughts to heaven above.

Thus has she been my guide through life—
My star of light through weal and woe;
My children's mother, and my wife,
Has made my home a heaven below:
And oh how grateful should I be
To Him who gave her heart to me!

Our five-and-twentieth marriage-day
I gave my love a silver ring;
The like years soon will fleet away,
And if, God spared, her praise I'll sing;
And while her bridal hand I hold,
I'll twine the silver ring with gold.

A FIRESIDE LILT.

I'm here sitting canty, I'm here sitting crouse,
Wi' routh o' life's comforts to grace my wee house;
And while through the past mony changes I scan,
I feel I'm a happy and gratefu' wee man.

My father, wha left a young orphan his name,
While frae his bright e'e faded life's flick'ring flame,
Said, "Jamie, aye follow ye heaven's genial plan,
Ye'll aye be a happy and gratefu' wee man."

My auld widowed mother, to me unco dear,
She left me nae siller, she left me nae gear;
She taught me that honesty honour aye wan,
And so I'm a happy and gratefu' wee man.

I hae a blithe wifie wha menses my hame,
And oh she's a pawky and coaxin' wee dame;

I canna get angry, do a' that I can,
And so I'm a happy and gratefu' wee man.

We hae ae sweet daughter, and ance we had twa,
But Heaven took our second dear darling awa';
Yet we'll gang and meet her, for life's but a span,
And so I'm a happy and gratefu' wee man.

We hae twa stout callants, wi' warm and true hearts,
Wha promise when men that they'll play manly parts;
In life's glorious race siccan chiels canna stan',
And so I'm a happy and gratefu' wee man.

I've had friends 'mong the great, I've had friends 'mong
the sma',
And never lost ane save wham death took awa';
But yonder I'll clasp them, wi' friendship's warm han',
And so I'm a happy and gratefu' wee man.

I hae dabbled in art, I hae dabbled in lair,
The mair that I mastered, I aye sought the mair;
There's routh mair to learn in yon bright sunny lan',
So still I'm a happy and gratefu' wee man.

MONODY FOR A DAUGHTER.

Come forth, sad heart, and tell thy grief—
So deeply felt, so closely pent;
Thy surcharged founts may find relief
If forth in gurgling streamlets sent
To flood with tears the vale of woe,
And lull thy grief with murmurs low.

The summer sky beams pure and bright,
The earth is decked with beauty rare,
All Nature teems with life and light,
And heavenly music fills the air;
But, lorn of her who made all dear,
To me all's gloomy, lone, and drear.

So pure, so beautiful, so good—
By all admired, by all beloved;

In cheerful or in mournful mood,
Her genial breast alike was moved;
And radiant smile or glistening tear
To all were given, to all were dear.

New charms were dawning every day,
New traits of sweetness every hour—
Her eye bright as the morning ray,
Her face fair as the opening flower.
Too pure for earth, she passed to heaven—
Leaving our hearts all seared and riven!

She had no selfish cares or fears;
She gloried in her neighbours' gladness;
Her schoolmates mourned her, bathed in tears;
Her playmates' mirth was changed to sadness.
And when her spirit passed away,
Joy left our happy home for aye.

But all throughout the day and night
Her last fond look still beams on me,
Shedding a ray of heavenly light
O'er dark and vast eternity;
While that last tender kiss and sigh
Have linked my soul to her on high.

Oh blessed hope! oh glorious thought!
That, rising brightly o'er the grave,
Show deathless life, so dearly bought
By Him who died our souls to save:
And through our sorrows lead us on
To worship at our Father's throne.

Dear child! we'll meet no more to part—
Afar from sorrow, death, and pain;
Where soul with soul, and heart with heart,
Join in the universal strain
That fills yon radiant orbs above
With one vast hymn of grateful love!

MONODY FOR A SISTER.

Farewell, dear sister of my infant days,
And sister teacher of my youthful years!
Through times long past, fast fading into haze,
How vividly thy genial worth appears!
A part of all I know, and all I feel,
Oh how can I my grief for thee conceal?

An only son, when I was but a child
Our father died and left us very poor;
But hard his widow and their orphans toiled
To keep away want from our cottage door;
And thou, the youngest of my sisters three,
Went forth to work, to help to nurture me.

Ah, well I recollect, when prone to play,
How lazily I trudged on to the school;

And often slyly would I slip away
To spend my days in playing merry fool;
When thou, who knew my tricks and ways, would come
And gently lead the bashful truant home.

And then thy voice, so melting and so clear,
Warbling the ballads of our dear old land,
Awoke my soul and charmed my ravished ear,
And made me early aim to gain command
Of strains like them to waft my thoughts along,—
And thus my youthful heart burst forth in song.

Thank God, I was enabled to return
In part the kindness shown to me when young;
And now, while mourning o'er thy humble urn,
Last of my family, thy requiem sung,
I feel my bosom glow with faith and love,
Assured we all shall meet in joy above.

WE'LL A' MEET ABOON.

Oh snell are the fangs o' the dour frost and snaw,
And mony dear friends they hae nithered awa' ;
Yet when I wad ettle my sorrow to croon,
A voice in the lift lilts "We'll a' meet aboon."
We'll a' meet aboon ! We'll a' meet aboon !
Oh what a blithe meeting yon meeting aboon !

When friends are laid low that through life hae been dear,
The dank mools laid ower them maks hope dow and sear ;
But an inward voice whispers "We'll follow them soon,
And meet them again in yon regions aboon."
We'll a' meet aboon ! We'll a' meet aboon !
Oh what a blithe meeting yon meeting aboon !

In the still hour o' night, 'mid the darkness so drear,
The faces we see and the voices we hear,
A' tell that the friends whom we mourn hover roun',
To light death's dark vale wi' a ray frae aboon.
We'll a' meet aboon ! We'll a' meet aboon !
Oh what a blithe meeting yon meeting aboon !

Oh bright are the stars that illume the mirk sky,
And kind eyes are glinting on us frae on high ;
A' kindled by Him wha to death lootit doun,
And opened our ken to yon glories aboon.
We'll a' meet aboon ! We'll a' meet aboon !
Oh what a blithe meeting yon meeting aboon !

Awa' wi' a' doubtings, awa' wi' a' fears,
Believe Him wha promised to dry a' your tears,
And made the truth clear as the bright summer noon,
That brothers below will be brothers aboon.
We'll a' meet aboon ! We'll a' meet aboon !
Oh what a blithe meeting yon meeting aboon !

WE'RE A' AE FAITHER'S BAIRNS.

When Heaven is aye sae bountiful wi' blessings teeming rife,
Why should we children of a day be slaves to selfish strife;
An' why should man hoard greedily the treasure that he earns,
Forgetting we are brithers a', and a' ae Faither's bairns.

Think on His love wha fills wi' life earth, ocean, sea, and sky,
Whase sun in glory shines alike on humble and on high;
Wha ower His creatures great and sma' wi' parent fondness yearns,
And let us strive by deeds to prove we're a' ae Faither's bairns.

Then follow Him wha first on earth taught brotherhood
to man;
Your hearts will open wide, your love the universe will
span,
And He, your Elder Brother, high enthroned ayont
the sterns,
Will clasp you by the hand and say, we're a' ae
Faither's bairns.

ONLY A WEE BIT FRACTIOUS.

SUGGESTED BY THOMAS FAED'S PICTURE FOR THE ROYAL ACADEMY, 1871.

See yon wee bonny bairnie, clasped on its mither's knee,
Its doggie and its dozing-tap are left to rest awee;
While its mither's heaving bosom and genial beaming eye,
Assure ye the wee fractious fit will unco soon be by.

And sae gin we are troubled wi' life's petty daily cares,
Let's ne'er forget the happiness o' whilk we get our shares,
And feel that, like this bonny bairn, we ha'e a Parent dear,
Wha's ready aye frae sorrow's e'e to kiss the glistening tear.

Then look ayont the present life, and let nae present
woe
E'er fret your hearts, or gaur your heads hing dowily
and low,
For round about on every side a Providence you'll
see,
Wi' routh to keep creation blithe through a' eternity.

GRANDMITHER'S PET.

Oh, Grandmither's Pet is a wee orphan wean—
O' five blooming bairnies, she's left here alane;
And for her twin titty our e'en still are wet,
Nae ferlie the fairy is Grandmither's Pet.

She's pettled sae mickle by grit and by sma',
Ye marvel her wits dinna wander awa';
But the pure pearly glance o' her e'e, black as jet,
Sheds kindness on a' wha ken Grandmither's Pet.

Sic queer thoughts she thinks, and sic queer things she says,
Ye wad think she had livit in lang bygane days,
Or that friends now departed whiles crack wi' her yet,
Sic auld-farrant fancies has Grandmither's Pet.

She gazes for hours in yon flower-margined well,
Whaur she sees her twin titty, when seeing hersel',
And trows that her tears wi' her titty's ha'e met
As they blob in that fountain—dear Grandmither's Pet.

Her heart is sae pure, and her vision sae clear,
Though we hope for the best, still we doubt and we fear
That radiance sae heavenly on earth soon may set,
And leave us in darkness—dear Grandmither's Pet.

GRANDFAITHER'S OE.

What a treasure to grandfaither is his wee oe,
As he scans its wee face wi' an e'e bright wi' joy,
And sees mirrored there friends o' auld-warld ken,
Till he feels himsel' young, though he's threescore an' ten!

Oh, auld age and infancy cotter an' gree,
When the wee tot sits crawin' on grandfaither's knee;
An' they crack, an' they kiss, an' they keek at ilk ither,
Till ye see that the tane is a part o' the tither.

The twa grow thegither like twin-blossomed flower,
Aye liker an' liker, in sunshine an' shower,
Till whiles yé wad think, as they nestle thegither,
The wean an' his grandfaither brither an' brither.

In vain may an auld man essay to grow young
By gaun through the mill o' a young wifie's tongue;
For youth in sic matches gaurs auld age grow aulder,
As the thaw melts the snaw but to gaur it feel caulder.

But the radiance o' youth gilds the grey pow o' age;
When the grandfaither's tears gaur his oe seem a sage;
And as the sun brightens while lengthens the day,
So age, lit by youth, wanes serenely away.

A HEART LOCKET.*

Dear friend, no marvel that I strain
  This little locket to my heart,
Then draw it forth, and gaze again,
  Till grateful tears warm-gushing start,
As memory conjures up anew
The long dark night that star shone through.

Threatened with tortures worse than death,
  Imprisoned in a felon's keep,
No friend a word of hope to breathe,
  No sympathising eye to weep,—
This darling child came day by day,
And chased my dismal dool away.

* An eminent statesman, when in prison, while his wife was absent pleading for mercy, was not allowed to see or talk with any person; but ultimately his infant daughter was permitted to spend a portion of each day with her father. He

Plunged in the lowest depths of woe,
Cut off from all my soul held dear—
No tears with mine allowed to flow,
No voice allowed to reach my ear,—
What radiant joy, what heavenly bliss,
Was in my infant daughter's kiss!

My dear wife, wandering o'er the land,
Her dying husband's cause to plead,
No longer in love's accents bland
My drooping soul could upward lead;
But hope burst through my prison bar—
My child became my morning-star.

Through that long year, as morning brake,
She filled my cell with love and light;
"Papa" the only word she spake,
But then we kissed from morn till night;
And kiss and glance, I felt and saw,
Were sent me from her dear "Mamma."

afterwards wore near his heart a locket with her miniature portrait, which, in his own words, recalled the time when he was wont to look on her as an angel sent from heaven to cheer him amid his despondency.

No marvel, therefore, that I strain
  This little locket to my heart;
Then draw it forth, and gaze again,
  Till grateful tears warm-gushing start:
For oh, the angel's pictured there
Who from my soul removed despair.

CARRY YOUR AIN SUNSHINE WI' YE.

Why need ye wander the wide world o'er,
Seeking frae life's dreamy sorrows to free ye
Happiness stands by your ain hallan-door,
Gin ye carry your ain sunshine wi' ye.

Sorrow may come when ye're dreaming o' joy;
Friendship and love, when sair sighed for, may flee ye;
But rain-cluds will pass frae your summer sky,
Gin ye carry your ain sunshine wi' ye.

Trust ye in Him never trusted in vain,
Him who has a'thing to gie, and forgie ye;
Amid mirk gloaming bright gleams ye'll gain,
Gin ye carry your ain sunshine wi' ye.

OUR HAPPY HOUSE AT HOME.

Our happy house at home! our happy house at home!
The wider that I wander, the further that I roam,
O'er the rich and fertile earth, o'er the ocean's surging foam,
Still dearer and still brighter is our happy house at home!

My honoured father's there, with his flowing silver hair—
My gentle mother's there, with her genial matron air—
And my own dear loving wife, with our children full of glee;
No marvel that our house at home is heaven on earth to me!

I see the humble cot, with bright roses clustered o'er;
I hear the streamlet's music as it murmurs by the door,

While singing birds and bleating lambkins swell the
tuneful din,
And everything without tells of happiness within.

My thoughts are full of home, for my household gods
are there;
Their happiness is all my aim, their comfort all my
care;
The blessed day is dawning when those generations
three
Shall clasp me to their hearts, and make that home a
heaven to me.

A LISTENER NEVER HEARS GUDE O' HIMSEL'.

I LOST my auld wifie, an' felt me sae cauld,
I sought for a young ane, like Davie o' auld,
An' made my best bow to our braw village belle—
"A listener never hears gude o' himsel'."

I wrote her a letter, saft, couthie, an' slee;
I bought her the brawest cheap shawl I could see,
Syne ca'ed wi' my present my love-tale to tell—
"A listener never hears gude o' himsel'."

There sat my braw joe wi' young Robin Affleck
(The deil weave a cravat o' hemp for his neck),
Baith gigglin' an' ettlin my letter to spell—
"A listener never hears gude o' himsel'."

Her wizzened auld mither soon e'ed me, an' leugh;
"Come in, freen'," quo she; "am I no young eneugh?"
Syne, losh! sic guffaws, as I scunnert an' fell—
"A listener never hears gude o' himsel'."

The auld mither's taunt an' the daughter's guffaw,
The cracks o' Rab's horse-whip, I yet hear them a',
As I lie a' my lane, cowerin', eerie, an' snell—
"A listener never hears gude o' himsel'."

GIN YE CANNA FORGET, YE CAN SURELY FORGIE.

Gin ye canna help poortith, ye surely can feel—
A kind word mak's sweet e'en a hair o' ait-meal;
An' though whiles puir bodies ungratefu' may be,
Gin ye canna forget, ye can surely forgie.

In bleak days o' winter, when wee birdies come
Around your door happin', a' cowerin' and numb,
They pick frae your loof—but wi' spring aff they flee,—
Gin ye canna forget, ye can surely forgie.

Though we seenil acknowledge His fatherly care,
Wha showers doun His blessings on a' late an' air,
Gin we kneel to Him humbly, His mercy our plea,
Though justice forget not, His love will forgie.

Let mankind be brothers, let man trust in man—
Gin a quarrel arise, lull the strife gin ye can ;
Gin friends part in wrath, let them meet to agree—
Gin ye canna forget, ye can surely forgie.

A STIEVE HEART AND A STURDY STEP WILL CLIMB THE STEEPEST BRAE.

Ne'er trow the day will lour throughout, although the
daw be dark;
Ne'er dream ye're doomed to darg through life, though
hard your early wark;
The morning grey and misty aften brings a golden
day—
A stieve heart and a sturdy step will climb the
steepest brae.

A wee bit jutting boulder whiles will help ye ower the
wa',
So ne'er despise the willing gift, although it may be sma';
The birdie, e'er he flees, is proud to hap alang the
spray—
A stieve heart and a sturdy step will climb the
steepest brae.

The road to happiness is aft wi' sorrows thickly strown;
The waur to win the mair we prize ilk comfort that we own;
And Peace and Freedom aft are gained by bluidy battle fray—
A stieve heart and a sturdy step will climb the steepest brae.

Then if the prize ye seek be high, and if your aim be pure,
Press onward ever hopeful, still be patient to endure;
For he wha seeks to enter heaven must watch, and work, and pray—
A stieve heart and a sturdy step will climb the steepest brae.

WIFIES AND WEANS.

When straining our sinews an' stenting our veins,
To buy a snug bield for our wifies an' weans,
It surely can neither be silly nor wrang,
While striving to rise 'mong the world's busy thrang,
To tent weel our winnings, and hain weel our gains,
To fend and mak' mensefu' our wifies an' weans.

Alack! when in manhood strang chields are laid low,
How dire the bereavement, how heavy the blow!
Still mair gin our dear anes are penniless left,
O' their bread and their bread-winner early bereft;
Oh, nought can sae soothe us 'mid death's parting pains,
As when we've provided for wifies an' weans.

Then while we are youthful, an' active, an' strong,
Still pressing wi' vigour life's journey along,

Let's band wi' our brithers, an' walk side by side,
Wi' them wha 'gainst evil days seek to provide;
An' ilk gie a share o' the treasure he hains,
To swell the joint purse o' our wifies an' weans.

Then we'll follow His hest wha lists kindly on high
To the widow's lone moan an' the orphan's sad sigh,
An' strive to keep poortith awa' frae the door
O' them left ahint us our loss to deplore;
For oh! it wad melt bosoms cauld as whin-stanes,
To leave unprovided for wifies an' weans.

WE'RE WEARIN' AWA'.

SUGGESTED BY THE FALL OF A PICTURESQUE ASH-TREE WHICH FOR AGES HAD GRACED THE CENTRE OF THE WEST MEADOW.

Wild soughs the wind as it sweeps loud and high,
Wild fleet the cluds o'er the grey grizzly sky;
Rain blatters, melting the cauld drizzling snaw—
We're wearin' awa', we're wearin' awa'.

Torn by the blast, yon gigantic ash-trce
Lies low, a wreck, on the auld verdant lea;
Proud was its bearing, and great was its fa'—
We're wearin' awa', we're wearin' awa'.

Bairnies its trunk aye danced merrily roun',
Clambered its branches, birds' nests to pu' doun;
'Neath its lown shadow love's whispers were law—
We're wearin' awa', we're wearin' awa'.

Frae strong meltin' heat o' the sun's solar ray,
Frae chill chokin' drift in the snell winter day,
It sheltered puir bodies, an' beasties an' a'—
We're wearin' awa', we're wearin' awa'.

The dow o' the leaf and the fa' o' the year,
Aye mak' us feel dowie, aye mak' us feel drear,
Mingling life's hinny wi' wee draps o' ga'—
We're wearin' awa', we're wearin' awa'.

Yet Hope's star will rise when life's welkin gloams
grey—
We feel *that* within us which ne'er can decay;
And death brings us life, as the night brings the
daw—
Though we're wearin' awa', we're wearin' awa'.

A DECEMBER SKETCH.

HOAR-FROST IN THE MEADOW WALK.

Though Nature seems dowie 'mid Winter sae chill,
Ne'er trow she is lifeless, ne'er dream she lies still;
For e'en gin at midnight ye roam a night-hawk,
You'll find her still busy in our Meadow Walk.

The sky is sae clear, and the moon shines sae bright,
Ye ne'er think o' hame-gaun, ye ne'er think o' night;
And ye hear the wee fairies how saftly they talk,
As they weave their hoar webs ower the auld Meadow Walk.

What bride at a weddin', what belle at a fair,
Could e'er wi' sic garland o' gems wreathe her hair,
As feather each tendril and circle each stalk,
O' yon hoary trees in our auld Meadow Walk?

The auld grey stane dykes are wi' silver sheathed o'er,
The auld timmer yetts are a' glist'ning wi' hoar;
Every garden and field, every furrow and bauk,
Are glamoured wi' diamonds in our Meadow Walk.

Spring brings us green buds, and the Simmer bright
flowers,
While Autumn wi' gowd cleeds our fields and our
bowers;
But Winter fair Nature still fairer can mak',
Wi' hanging hoar-pearls round our auld Meadow Walk.

WINTER PROMPTINGS.

The days they are snell, and the nights they are drear,
The wark it is scarce, and the meal it is dear;
So ye wha ha'e aught in your bicker to spare,
Come gie your puir neighbours your ower-lipping share.

The sheep ha'e their stells on the hoary hill-taps,
The cattle ha'e thick touzy hides for their haps;
But the half-naked puir, scant o' fuel and meal,
Need britherly helping and britherly feel.

The bauld little robin haps in at your door,
The pawky wee sparrow will peck aff your floor;
But the heaven-soaring lark 'mang the cauld drift will dee,
Afore he'll come cowerin' your moolins to pree.

So in the dark dens o' the dingy Auld Toun,
Are puir honest folks wha wad rather drap doun,
Afore they wad tell o' their wants or their waes—
Afore they wad beg either parritch or claes.

Then trow na the puir whas' loud plaint meets your ear,
Are those sairest pinched in a winter so drear;
For shame, honest shame, aft will rise in the breast,
And poortith's mair silent the mair she is prest.

Then share ye your bickers, and share ye your claes,
And help ye the needy in these dowie days;
And while ye feed birds on your lown window-sill,
Spare a crust for your neighbour mair desolate still.

WINTER'S WA-GANG.

The snell blasts o' winter ha'e gnirled young and auld,
And birdies and beasties ha'e perished o' cauld,
And mony dear friends to their lang hame ha'e gane,
Leaving bleer't eyes to weep, leaving lorn breasts to mane.

The southland wind soughs wi' a saft soothing sound,
The birdies are churmin' a' cheerily round;
But dour norland blasts may bring new wreaths o' snaw,
An' sweep mony mair o' our dearest awa'.

Though winter aft strikes doun the auld and the frail,
And passes unskaithing the young and the hale,
The brightest young buds aft are blighted in spring—
The eagle is struck when he's strong on the wing.

We deem oursel's safe when the short days are by,
And look for new life when the summer draws nigh;
But we ken na our day and we ken na our hour,
For we fleet like the sunbeam and fade like the flower.

Life's short at the langest, so work while you may,
And leave the warld better when ye're ta'en away;
And wait for your winnings in yon starry sphere,
For every day tells us our hame isna here.

A GREY DAY.

Grey clothes the earth, and grey floats in the sky,
Clouds piled on clouds fleet in huge masses by,
Sending the mountains still further away,
Veiling their summits in thin robes of grey.

Skeleton trees spread their branches so bare,
Lapping in sap from the moist-feeding air;
Meadows that lately all snow-shrouded lay
Waken to life 'neath this happing of grey.

Edina's old Castle is murky and dun,
Grey mist envelops each porthole and gun;
Turrets and spires that so flaunt in bright day,
Dwindle to nought 'mid these pale wreaths of grey.

Arthur lies guarding dear Holyrood fane,
Grey on his haunches and grey on his mane;
Tall beetling Crags are all tipt as by spray—
Each jutting knowlet is covered with grey.

Yon lofty lands in the towering Old Town,
Golden in sunshine, in shade dingy brown,
Flicker and change, as like phantoms they play.
Cloud-castles rising on cloudlands of grey.

Radiant in beauty and mighty in power,
Scotland, my country, in sunshine or shower,
Reign on thy cloud-throne for ever and aye,
Glory unmatched in thy rokelay of grey.

THE EAST HAAR.

Creeping and curling athwart the grey lift,
Thick chokin' haar-cluds in dense masses drift,
Drizzling and drouking baith body and beast—
Naething can thole this dank haar frae the east.

Nature croaks hoarsely as deeing o' croup,
Lilies and primroses drowsily droop;
Baith earth and sky are fermenting like yeast—
Wearifu' pest is this haar frae the east.

Greyer and greyer these haar-cluds still loom;
Shadows, like spectres, glide on through the gloom;
We'll no see the sun for a week at the least—
Licht canna pierce through this haar frae the east.

Young folk grow surly, and auld folk grow lame,
A'body cowers by the fireside at hame ;
Yet birdies whistle that they lo'e to feast
On life that's evoked by this haar frae the east.

It draps feeding sap on our high heathy knowes,
It moistens the clods, and it slockens the ewes,
And blessings are spread by great Nature's High Priest,
E'en in this cauld cheerless haar frae the east.

Then let us be trustfu', though whiles sairly prest,
For He sends us aye what He kens is the best ;
And though cluds o' darkness whiles ower us may reist,
His sun will dispel e'en this haar frae the east.

A VOICE FROM THE WOODS.

Come out wi' your moolins, come out wi' your crums,
And keep in slee baudrons to sing ye "Grey thrums;"
Syne when the Spring opens we'll sing ye a sang,
And flood ye wi' music the Simmer days lang.

We're a' unco hungry, frae Robin to Craw,
Around us there's naething but cauld wreaths o' snaw;
Then help us to weather the dreigh winter through,
And our wee breasts will ever feel grateful to you.

Poor folks seenil starve, though they're often pinched
sair,
For they aye ha'e some neighbours wi' something to
spare;
But when the snaw buries up bank, bush, and tree,
Poor birdies to birdies ha'e naething to gie.

It surely maun gladden your hearts and your een,
When round your heaped bickers we happin' are seen;
While we churm, and we chirp, and we dab, and we
flee,
To halve ilka bite wi' our mate on the tree.

Then come wi' your moolins, and come wi' your crums,
And keep in slee baudrons to sing ye "Grey thrums;"
Syne when the Spring opens we'll sing ye a sang,
And flood ye wi' music the Simmer days lang.

APRIL.

Come, hamely Muse, and let us sing
The praises o' the budding Spring;
Afore April has passed away,
And left her blooming daughter May,
To charm us wi' her leaves and flowers,
Her sunny skies and shady bowers.

Now dreary Winter's reign is ower,
And nature feels her new-born power;
And grateful for her timely rest,
She opens wide her genial breast,
And sends forth shoots of healthy braird,
And haps the yirth wi' bright green swaird.

The birds are lilting on the tree,
The lambs are frisking ower the lea;

The crimson gowans stud the green,
The blushing blossom glists like sheen,
Gemming the new-leaved boughs that swing
Their arms aloft in breezy Spring.

Yet gusty winds sweep ower the hill,
And rain-cluds swell the brattling rill;
While in lown neuk and cosy creek,
Wee genty gowd-e'ed flowerets keek;
And light and shadow, sun and haze,
Are chasing ither ower the braes.

Dense wreaths are rushing ower the lift,
Now scattering showers, now blattering drift;
While here and there sma' specks o' blue,
The tattered cluds are glintin' through,
Revealing radiance bright on high,
And leading in the simmer sky.

The wisest o' our birds—the craw—
O' Faith reads lessons till us a',
For, e'er a sprout has graced the tree,
He 'gins to big his nest on hie,
And, cawing, tells his loving dame,
"Our pets maun ha'e a cosy hame."

And sae when cluds around ye gloom,
Or in the distance dangers loom,
Aye look ye up ayont, above,
Hae faith in Him whas' law is love;
Look forward like the trusting craw,
And trow that simmer days will draw.

THE SUMMER SKY.

All Nature lies listening, enraptured and mute,
While 'mid yon bright welkin a soft thrilling lute
Seems played by an angel, far, far up on high,
'Tis the matin lark's lay to the sweet summer sky.

The balmy air's veiled in a silvery haze,
The hill-peaks are radiant with burning gold rays,
While air-castles tower, and air-oceans lie,
Afar on the verge of the sweet summer sky.

The young green leaves twine round the old dark-brown
boughs,
And fringe with bright garlands their storm-beaten
brows;
While deep in the dell, where the stream has run dry,
The flowers lap new life from the sweet summer sky.

The sheep and the cattle drop low on their knees—
To churm cease the birds, and to hum cease the bees;
While air, earth, and sea, with a low gentle sigh,
All blend in the bliss of a sweet summer sky.

Enchanted we gaze, and enraptured we sing,
While Fancy soars upward on Hope's orient wing;
And our souls are all linked in the pure holy tie
That binds us to heaven in the sweet summer sky.

BONNY CURRIE GLEN.

This weary warld I've wandered ower, aye wooing
Nature fair,
Aye seeking health and vigour frae her balmy bracing
air;
But o' a' the bonny places, and they're mony that
I ken,
There's nane that's half sae dear to me, as bonny
Currie Glen.

The larch and birch befringe its braes wi' tassels glis-
tening green,
Deep in the dell the silver stream is deftly dancing
seen!
While heather-bell and lady-fern embrace in ilka fen,
A' jouking round the wee brown paths in bonny
Currie Glen.

The burnie sings sae saftly as it gurgles low and sweet,
The wild flowers spring sae genty as they lout to kiss your feet;
Ye canna keep frae sketching them, wi' pencil or wi' pen,
That a' the warld may ken the pets o' bonny Currie Glen.

The very chuckie-stanes that lie low in the streamlet's bed,
A' ha'e a hand in helping out the melody that's led;
While sight and sound in harmony, ilk ither beauty len',
And strive wha'll heighten maist the charms o' bonny Currie Glen.

Yon grey auld castle towers aloft in glory on the knowe,
And Brownie brigs bestride the stream o'er ilka craggy howe;
While slee bit neuks whaur pawky lovers dander but and ben,
Are cookit in the warlock braes o' bonny Currie Glen.

But what were a' these beauties, but for them wha own
them a',
Whas' kindness scatters happiness amang baith grit
and sma'?
She is the first o' womankind, and he the best o' men,—
Heaven bless the bonny Leddy, and the Laird o'
Currie Glen!

SKETCH—CARNWATH MUIR.

The bawsy milk-cow stands mumpin' alane,
On the sappy face o' the grassy brae;
The burnie croons o'er its bed o' stane,
A mingled cadence o' joy and wae.

The east wind whommles the cauld grey cluds
Ower the sky whaur patches are glinting blue;
The birdies are mute in the furzy wuds,
Though the churm is heard o' the lane curlew.

The wee wild flow'rets, nodding their pows,
Keep time wi' the burnie's harmony;
The fearns and heath-bells wag on the knowes,
And the tall rash-bushes jouk jauntily.

The laigh lintled door o' yon wee cot house
Leads to a cozy but and a ben,
Whaur a stalwart carle and a wifie douce
Will gie ye a share o' their tappit hen.

What though we boastna o' gowden skies?
What though we bragna o' flowery plains?
Here Freedom's banner unsullied flies,
And self-made independence reigns.

Our laws, our religion, are a' our ain—
Nane daur meddle wi' you or wi' me;
There's a patriot band round each bien hearth-stane,
That will aye keep dear auld Scotland free.

THE "LANG WHANG."*

A SKETCH.

O DREARY "Lang Whang," wi' your auld brown muirs,
Your deep black mosses, and heigh grey hills,
Whaur the winter snaws and the summer showers
Swell into rivers the drizzling rills.
Dear, dear are your cauld bleak braes to me,
As ilk weel-kenned howff meets again my e'e.

Here first 'neath a humble thatch-roofed shieling
I struck the chords o' my hamely lyre,
Inspired by holy patriot feeling,
Proudly bequeathed to son frae sire;
And here, 'neath a muirland shepherd's plaid,
I won the heart o' my mountain maid.

* The "Lang Whang" is the bleakest portion of Carnwath Muir.

I ha'e seen ye shrouded in wreaths o' snaw ;
I ha'e seen ye gleaming in bright sunshine ;
I ha'e dreamt o' ye aften when far awa',
Mingled wi' cronies o' auld langsyne ;
Now ance mair I gaze on your heathy braes—
How memory broods ower these lang-gane days !

The round-aboot fire, wi' the stories and jokings—
How happy the hearts that were wont to be there !
Frae the auld wifie darning her gudeman's stockings
To the gudeman cosh in his auld arm-chair ;
While a'body laughed at the jokes and the stories,
And a'body joined in the sang and the chorus.

The half-smoored kiss, and the low-heaved sigh,
Tauld o' love's murmurs, sae low and sae sweet,
Till the herd's sweet fiddle gaured a' loup high,
And beauty and manhood sprang to their feet ;
While the auld bodies glowered, hotching, happy, and fain,
And wished they were souple and youthfu' again.

Or doun by the burn, in the lang simmer even,
When the kye and the sheep were a' herdit hame ;

How hope lichtit up, as wi' flaughts o' levin,
The hearts that were kindled by love's pure flame;
Wha daundered and wandered the hale night through,
And sleely cam' hame glist wi' morning dew.

Ah! while 'mid these auld scenes rises the new,
How grateful the feeling that floods my breast
When I meet here an auld friend, genial and true,
Wha shelters me snug in his cozy nest,
And maks me ettle to croon a bit sang
E'en noo, as of yore, 'mid the dreary "Lang Whang!"

DARNICK TOWER.*

O Darnick Tower, brave Darnick Tower,
Thou ancient keep of stalwart power,
Bright peace may shine, dark war may lower—
What'er may come,
Prepared for all is Darnick Tower,
Good Heiton's home.

Around thee rise on every side,
On towering hills, in valleys wide,
Mansions and abbeys, art's chief pride
In days of yore,
Whose fame still rises with the tide
Of Scotland's gloir.

* This the finest specimen now extant of the ancient border keeps, is within a mile of Melrose, and has been in the possession of the Heiton family for upwards of four centuries. The present proprietor has renovated and furnished the venerable structure in a manner highly creditable to his good taste, both as an architect and an antiquarian.

The silver Tweed flows through the vale,
As murmuring some fond lover's tale;
While borne upon each mountain gale
Are floods of song,
And memory peoples hill and dale
With fancy's throng.

Artist and minstrel still reign here,
Still Tam and Wattie's lilts rise clear,
And John Morvo, whas' art could rear
Yon heavenly shrine—
These masters still mak' Melrose dear
As auld langsyne.

Great Michael too, the world's wonder,
Wha pumped the rain, and rolled the thunder,
And wha, when Southerns sought to plunder
Our dear auld lan',
Made strongest foes soon sink doun under
His powerfu' ban.

The Rhymer's Glen, the Eildon Hills,
The gurlin' burns, the purlin' rills,

The breeze that through the braid strath trills,
The flowers caressing,
The birdies wi' their vocal bills
Their love-suits pressing:

Wi' siccan beauties spread around,
We feel we stand on holy ground;
And while a laird like Heiton's found
In Darnick Tower,
A' grateful hearts to him are bound
By genial power.

The mony queer auld-farrant fykes,
Hauberks and helmets, spears and spikes,
Ance borne by sturdy stalwart tykes,
That deck his chaumer,
A rhymin' chiel like me begykes
Wi' magic glaummer.

Ae night I dreamt in that bien house
I met three cronies crackin' crouse,
Sae saft and low, ye'd heard a mouse
Cheep gin 'twere there,
Till out I bawled, "Your cracks let loose,
I'll tak' the chair.

"And dinna gloom though I should spier
What you three chields are doing here;
Come ye wi' peace, come ye wi' wear,
To bless or curse us?
Or hae ye come, like faithers dear,
To teach and nurse us?"

Ane spak: "I'm Tam o' Ercildoun,
Wha aye has worn the Rhymer's crown
Since in yon valley sweet and lown
'Neath Eildon tree
The Elfin Queen slipt saftly doun
And sang to me.

"And aye sinsyne my gosshawk e'e
Afar could coming troubles see,
And Scotland ne'er had aught to dree
But she gat warning
Frae me, in time hersel' to free
Frae reavers sorning."

The second said: "Tam, it's but fair
In Border glories ye should share;

But I ance rode to France through air
On the Black Deil,
And Michael Scott did muckle there
For Scotland's weal.

"Ae night, when daffin in my glee,
Ane o' my busy deils and me
Cleft the big Eildon Hill in three
To please my noddle,
And let puir bodies on the spree
Hame safely toddle."

The third ane spak: "Are ye baith daft,
Or trow ye Walter Scott's sae saft
As to believe ye gat the craft
To work sic wonders
Frae deil or elfin, wha aye laught
At man's warst blunders?

"Ye gat your gifts frae that Great Power
Wha sends the sunshine and the shower;
Ye should be grateful for the dower
O' sang he gave,
That even in danger's mirkest hour
Mak's Scotch hearts brave.

"And sae we a' hae done our best,
Wi' sang and story, joke and jest,
To gaur our country stand the test
Amang a' ithers,
Obeying the supreme behest
To love our brithers."

"Hurrah!" I cried; "here comes our host—
Darnick could ne'er a kinder boast;
Come, fill your bumper to my toast,
Wi' cheers let's drink it."
When, lo! the dream—the drink—was lost,—
My e'elids winkit.

THE GURLY BURN.

A SKETCH FROM NATURE.

Wee gurly burn, wee gurly burn—
Fu' mony kittle jouk and turn
Ye tak' as on your way ye journ-
ey to the sea, wee gurly burn.

Aye as the other stane ye slap,
A wee flower nods its happy tap;
And glowerin' trouties new life lap
Frae your hill treasures, gurly burn.

And birdies listen to the soun'
O' your swollen wavelets brattling doun,
Syne strain their throats wi' genial croon
To swell your sang, wee gurly burn.

The ferns douk down their freckled heads,
The rocks are streaked wi' siller threads;
And sunny glints string lammer beads
Around your brow, wee gurly burn.

What though the hills are hid in haur,
And though the storm scowls high and far?
Whaure'er ye come, by creek or scaur,
Ye bring bright beauty, gurly burn.

And Tam, whas' bien hame crouns the brae,
Round whilk your wimplin' waters play,
Mak's short and blithe the langest day
Spent by his ain wee gurly burn.

SEPTEMBER.

SKETCH FROM NATURE: ERICSTANE, NEAR MOFFAT.

Come, mount these hills on pinions strong,
Dear Muse, and sing a hearty song,
And tell what pleasing pictures throng
Those regions in September.

The clear blue sky comes glinting through
Grey mottled clouds of varied hue,
And, lo! a rainbow spans the view
With glory in September.

And as cloud-shadows changing glide
Alang the glen or mountain-side,
The harvest-stooks in gowden pride
Arise to grace September.

The sunbeams struggle wi' the rain
The light or shade o' day to gain,
For each to leave their marks are fain
On the brow o' young September.

The burns are wimpling, churming low,
The streams join chorus as they flow,
And gaur the chuckie-stanes below
Dance welcome to September.

And in ilk slee sequestered nook,
Whaur ferns and harebells nod and jouk,
Oh, what a page in Nature's book
To read in dear September!

High on the mountain-summits green
White flocks of sheep and lambs are seen,
True types o' happiness serene
In genial kind September.

Sheep without shepherds canna be,
And sae ayont yon headland lea
The shepherd's cot stands snug and slee,
Weel plenished in September.

See cowies grazing in the vale,
Wi' munching mou' and swirling tail—
Losh, wi' what gust the beasties hail
The stubble in September!

And, oh, how bienly 'mid the glen
Stands Ericstane, ye a' maun ken,
Wi' welcome but and welcome ben,
Mak's jolly aye September!

ERICSTANE BRAE.

Oh happy are a' around Ericstane Brae,
Its hills are aye green, though its skies whiles are grey;
And for laughing and daffing and joyous deray,
Ye'll ne'er match the gudeman o' Ericstane Brae.

Strang grey-plaided shepherds stalk ower the lane hills,
Blithe barefitted lassies bleach claes by the rills;
And lammies in thousands rin plisky in play,
While their mithers bleat saftly on Ericstane Brae.

The Annan comes plashing wi' pith and wi' speed,
Frae yon velvet ravine ayont sweet Core Head,
And mingles its notes wi' the wee lintie's lay
As they chime wi' the heath-bells o' Ericstane Brae.

Afar ower the hills, and afar ower the plains,
Harmoniously float on the low dulcet strains,
That Nature is warbling sae grateful and gay,
Sae happy are a' around Ericstane Brae.

Frae the Tweed to the Annan, ower mountain and glen,
The Laird scatters blessings on but and on ben;
And ne'er a puir body is left to dree wae,
Gin kenned by the kind Laird o' Ericstane Brae.

The King o' the Borders, the King o' the Core,
The first for a joke, and the first for a splore;
Gin ye want to ken mair, gang and stay for a day
Aneath the snug roof-tree o' Ericstane Brae.

A ROADSIDE SKETCH.

A WEE bairn sits 'neath yon hawthorn bloom,
Herding a young quey mumpin' alane ;
An' by the roadside, 'mang the gowden broom,
Sits an auld man on an auld grey stane.

The whinlet adorns the hoary roadside,
Wi' its genty form and yellow flowers ;
The amorous lavrock is lilting wi' pride
The praise o' his mate 'mang the grass that cowers.

Like velvet damask the grassy sward,
Is strewn wi' gowans white and yellow ;
The craws caw, caw in the stalkit yard,
On the aik the mavis warbles mellow.

The hare whirring flees through the wavy corn,
The rabbit derns in the kailyard sheugh;
The chattering shilflaw pipes his shrill horn,
The horse jogs on in the ridging plough.

And here comes a farmer along the road,
E'eing the fields wi' a farmer's pride:
And shouldna we a' be gratefu' to God,
Whas' beauties adorn e'en this lane roadside?

MARRIAGE IN MAY.

"Awake, sweet Kate, my winsome dear!
Awake with waking day;
The birds all sing, the flowers all spring,
Leaves bud from every spray,
An' the sunlight of thine eyes so clear
Shall warm the infant May."

"I'm drowsy still, my dearest Bill,
I'm loath to say you nay—
But if I rise, with winking eyes,
I'll wink on all the day;
My papered hair would make you stare,
My bonnet's locked away."

"Tut, don your crimson cloak and hood,
Come like a fairy fay,

Nor let thy lips thy wits eclipse,
Nor say me longer nay;
All April 'nay' hath been thy mood,
Let it be 'yes' in May."

"May weddings are unlucky aye,
They're out of time and tune;
Then talk not, pray, of marriage-day
Till the merry month of June:
So take you 'nay' till the end of May,
You'll get 'yes' very soon."

"No more I'll wait, my own dear Kate,
Make haste and come away;
This is the morn that summer's born,
And you're the Queen of May;
So 'yea' or 'nay,' whate'er you say,
I'll marry you to-day."

"Indeed, dear Bill, you'll have your will,
Whatever I may say;
So there's my hand, since you command,
I must and shall obey;
Then get the Priest—our wedding-feast
We'll have this very day."

A VOLUNTEER DUET.

"Good morning, Mary dear!
  Oh, where have you been roaming?
Good morning, Mary dear!
  Oh, where have you been roaming?
Say, was't the skylark warbling clear,
Whose heavenly tones have charmed your ear,
  And woo'd you forth this morning, Mary dear?"

"I came to meet with you—
  I dreamt that you were coming;
I came to meet with you—
  I dreamt that you were coming:
I've such a story for your ear,
I could not rest till you should hear
  The wondrous tale this morning, Harry dear."

"What tale have you for me,
You waggish little fairy?
What tale have you for me,
You waggish little fairy?
Say, have your gambols wild and free,
Brought to your feet some fool like me?
There's some new joe this morning, Mary dear."

"Oh, I am now grown sage,
For I'm about to marry;
Oh, I am now grown sage,
For I'm about to marry:
A youth hath proffered me his love,
And swears that he that love will prove,
By shooting you this morning, Harry dear."

"Oh, what's the puppy's name,
Who thus dare brag and bluster?
Oh, what's the puppy's name,
Who thus dare brag and bluster?
Before another hour hath passed,
The vaunting fool shall breathe his last,—
I'll shoot him dead this morning, Mary dear."

"You needn't prime or load,
For such a filibuster;
You needn't prime or load,
For such a filibuster:
I told him how at Wimbledon,
Your gun the Queen's own prize had won,
When he bade me 'good morning,' Harry dear."

"Then let us sign and seal,
We'll knock the parish priest up;
Then let us sign and seal,
We'll knock the parish priest up;
And he the sacred knot shall twine,
That makes me yours, and makes you mine;—
Oh, happy, happy morning, Harry / Mary dear!"

TO A STREAM.

Slowly and silently glidest thou along,
Dear to the child of the picture or song;
'Neath the sweet hawthorn, whose glistening blossom
Gleams pure as snow in thy silver bosom;
While sky and earth as reflected in thee,
Are linked in a magical purity.

I gaze upon yonder cloudlets so dun,
That seem sad to part with the setting sun;
While the softly shading pencil of even
Is darkening the eastern margin of heaven;
And the fading sky and the distant sea
Are blended in mutual obscurity.

I gaze on yon radiant western sky,
That glows with a parting lover's eye,

While the glorious monarch of day and light
Proudly bids all in our welkin good night,
And brilliantly borne on his golden car,
Ushers in morn to some region afar.

O mighty monarch! to travel with thee
O'er the boundless track of immensity,
Visiting planets all rolling around thee,
Worshipping Him who with glory hath crowned thee;
And far from these scenes of sorrow and sense,
To bask in the ray of Omnipotence.

Yet why, my spirit, so high wouldst thou soar,
The Deity's wondrous works to adore,
While numberless beauties round thee are spread,
From the mountain's top to the streamlet's bed,
Where the dark-brown firs to the grey cliffs cling,
In the lonely dell where the wild flowers spring?

Then come, my fancy, I'll lull thee to rest,
And build thee a bower in this grateful breast;
Check thy wild flight, and awake from thy dream,
And we'll slowly stray by this silent stream,
And muse on the beauty that's scattered around us,
Nor stray from the spot to which goodness hath bound us.

A CHRISTMAS ROUNDELAY.

THERE's joy in the cottage, there's joy in the hall,
When Christmas, dear Christmas, brings comfort to all;
When friends, who for fame or for fortune may roam,
Feel their hearts bounding back to the circle at home;
And nature bursts forth in a gay roundelay,
To honour man's dearest and best holiday.
Ju-vel-le-ra! Ju-vel-le-ra!

Oh, bright shone the star that illumed the blest morn,
Announcing to men that a Master was born
To teach them true wisdom, to fill them with love,
To lead them from earth to the region above,
To light up the grave with futurity's ray,
And from death and night to evoke life and day.
Ju-vel-le-ra! Ju-vel-le-ra!

Then hallow the radiance so bright and divine,
And let all your hearts in pure friendship combine;
Go help every want, and go soothe every woe,
And with brother's arm raise your brother when low;
Be genial while happy, be thoughtful while gay,
And make every heart blithe on dear Christmas Day.
Ju-vel-le-ra! Ju-vel-le-ra!

A HOLIDAY CHANT.

Hark! how the south wind sings through the green leaves,
Dancing so merrily, flickering so free;
Mark how the sunbeams glistening like sheen, weaves
Garlands of glory o'er mountain and lea.
Bright flowers are springing, sweet birds are singing,
All Nature joins in one gay roundelay;
While we are roaming, from dawning till gloaming,
Joyous and grateful,—oh, hail, happy day!

Clear as the streamlet that glides on before us,
Pure as the balm of the sweet mountain air;
Bright as the gold summer sky floating o'er us,
Be all our thoughts in this region so fair.
Bright flowers are springing, sweet birds are singing,
All Nature joins in one gay roundelay;
While we are roaming, from dawning till gloaming,
Joyous and grateful,—oh, hail, happy day!

THE HOUR FOR WOOING.

Come, my lassie, come—
Come, my bonny Mary—
Come, and let us roam
'Neath the sky so starry.
Hark! the mavis sing,
Hark! the cushet cooing,
Hark! the sheep-bell ring,—
Now's the hour for wooing.

Doun yon nameless dell,
Let us wander, Mary;
Nane can guess or tell,
Though a while we tarry.
What though shadows fa'
Ower the dell sae eerie,
Till the morning daw,
We can never weary.

Oh, you aye mak' the night
  Sparkle, jewelled in glory,
Shining aye sae bright,
  Wha but maun adore ye?
Ever sweet as dear,
  Ever gude as bonny,
By my saul I swear,
  I'll doat for ever on ye.

Then come, my lassie, come—
  Come, my bonny Mary—
Come, and let us roam
  'Neath the sky so starry.
Hark! the mavis sing,
  Hark! the cushat cooing,
Hark! the sheep-bell ring,—
  Now's the time for wooing.

THE CORE WELL SECRET.

Ye needna' be speirin', for I winna' tell,
What I said to Mary doon by the Core Well,
That feeds a' the flowers in yon slee cookit dell,
And murmurs as saftly as Mary hersel'.

Her faither and mine had been lang, lang acquent,
Baith rented hill-farms at a wanworth o' rent,
And when we were bairns it aye somehoo befell,
We crooned ower our tasks by the lanely Core Well.

I soon left the herding, and finished the schools,
I bounded awa' whaur there's nae room for fools;
And baith head and heart were aye nerved by the spell
Dear Mary wove round me aside the Core Well.

She had wooers frae glens, she had wooers frae hills,
Wha cam' to the fairs decked wi' ruffles and frills,
And bragged o' the hirsels that they had to sell,
But they kenned na the words that were blabbed by
Core Well.

Sae when I cam' hame wi' some fortune and fame,
And asked my dear Mary to share my ain name,
She keeked in my face, but her words I'll no tell—
They were just my ain back again frae the Core Well.

SONG.

AIR—"O GIN MY LOVE."

O BUT the earth is fair and flowery,
O but the sun shines bright on hie,
But fairer, and brighter, and dearer to me
Is the kindly keek o' my lassie's blue e'e.

As heaven's sweet air to the wearied frame,
As morning's daw' to the waukrife e'e,
As blobs o' dew to the opening flower,
Sae is the smile o' my lassie to me.

Earth bears nae fruit that prees sae sweet,
Heaven draps nae dew that fa's sae free;
Nae tongue can tell, nae heart can trow,
The tide o' joy that wells through me.

THE SISTER-MOTHER.*

What angel is this, who, with tear-loaded eyes,
And young virgin breast heaving high with soft sighs,
In accents so thrilling, so gentle and mild,
Pleads for her young brother, a motherless child?

Their father had left them; their mother, sore tried,
Hard-fated had struggled, heart-broken had died:
And this angel orphan, left mother to three,
Pleads for her young brother—O God, what a plea!

No heart can resist it: she toils night and day,
And keeps from her darlings *snell* hunger away:
See, see her so bashful, so languid, so pale,
And read there her worth and her heart-melting tale.

* Suggested by an incident which occurred at a recent election of boys to Daniel Stewart's Hospital.

The silent plea's won: thanks to kind Daniel Stewart,
There's a home for such orphans bequeathed by his true heart.
And if he had never assisted another,
Heaven had blessed him for aiding this sweet Sister-Mother.

ODE TO SCOTTISH ART.

Hail, Scottish Art, dear Scottish Art!
What genial bliss thy charms impart
To every eye and every heart,
Spell-bound by thee, dear Scottish Art!

Thou conjur'st up with vivid power
That day, when, 'mid the dark'ning lower
Of Despot's frown, brave Wallace Wight
Shed o'er old Scotland Freedom's light,
Which radiant shone at Bannockburn,
When Bruce gave Edward stern return,
And set his bleeding country free
From Southern chains and slavery.
Hail, Scottish Art!

Thou show'st us drear discordant times,
When stern old Bigot's murd'rous crimes
Wrung Scotland's heart with poignant throes,
Until her sore-tried sons arose,
And, 'mid her mountains bleak and bare,
First raised their voice in praise and prayer;
Then with their good broadswords let free
Religious light and liberty.
Hail, Scottish Art!

Or with a wizard's magic wand,
Thou conjur'st up sweet fairyland,
Where, 'midst the gleaming glaumoury sheen,
Puck and his brother elves are seen,
With Queen and King linked in love's laurels,
Or fuming fierce in petty quarrels;
While from the summer midnight sky,
The amorous stars are peeping sly.
Hail, Scottish Art!

Thou tak'st us to the "roaring game,"
Where man and master rank the same;
Or to the lively country fair,
Where old folks crack and young folks pair;

Or to the honest cottar's home,
From whence no wailing plaints e'er come;
For why? the peasant's strong right arm,
Keeps wife an' weans from want and harm.
Hail, Scottish Art!

And by that cottar's snug fireside
We see the source of Scotland's pride,
For manly sons and daughters fair,
And tottums clambering grand-dad's chair,
Are clustered round that cozy hearth,
Blessing the dear spot of their birth;
While joyous song, or fervent prayer,
Tell grateful, happy hearts are there.
Hail, Scottish Art!

Thou show'st how clouds and sunbeams play
Amid our skies on summer day;
And where are hills and dales like ours,
Now crowned with light, now drowned with showers?
While glassy lake and silver stream
Change with each fitful shade and gleam;
And artists, wheresoe'er they roam,
Find Scotland landscape's richest home.

Hail, Scottish Art, dear Scottish Art!
What genial bliss thy charms impart
To every eye and every heart,
Spell-bound by thee, dear Scottish Art!

ODE FOR THE BIRTHDAY OF ROBERT BURNS.

Birthday of Burns, to Scotland dear,
Wha, as thou comest round ilk year,
Gars Scotsmen gather far an' near
Owre a' the yirth,
To hail the day wi' festive cheer
Ga'e Robin birth.

Bleak blew the wind the heath atour,
The drifting sleet swirled ower the muir,
And 'neath yon sheiling frail an' puir
Fond breasts were sobbin',
When, 'mid the tempest stern and dour,
Hame cam' dear Robin.

Great things frae sma' beginnings rise,
The siller mists veil gowden skies,

The rainbow brightest shows its dyes
'Mid murky air;
And beauty clad in humblest guise,
Is doubly fair.

Sae he wha on that wintry morn
Within yon peasant's cot was born,
Arose wi' glory to adorn
His native land;
And ower a' hearts baith blithe an' lorn
To hold command.

Birds sang to him frae ilka bough,
Flowers at his step the sod peeped through—
To please that sangster at the plough
Ilk vied wi' ither;
While every lovely tone and hue
He linked thegither.

At gloamin' in the harvest-field,
Ayont a new-shorn wheat-stook bield,
When wooers murmuring lay concealed
Exchangin' vows,
They blushed to hear their thoughts revealed
By Robin's muse.

At e'en when led by hoary sire,
His voice rose 'mang that cottage choir;
What heart like his could feel the fire,
The sacred glow,
Whilk men wi' brother-love inspire
On yirth below!

In every joy he took a part,
O' every grief he felt the smart;
And gin a neighbour tholed the dart
O' sorrow keen,
The pang that racked that neighbour's heart
Bleer't Robin's een.

In crowded senates, kirks, or ha's,
Whaur knaves or feigners sought applause,
Robin, unscaured by cloaks or braws,
Or slee pretence,
Aye targed them tightly wi' the tawse
O' common-sense.

His hand the warmest friendship pressed,
His breast the fondest love caressed,

His head the clearest, manliest, best,
To meet a' turns;
What age or country e'er possessed
A man like Burns!

A bumper!—let your cheers ascend
To Burns, the patriot, poet, friend,
Whase matchless lyrics lustre lend
To Scotland's gloir;
Whase fame shall more and more extend,
Till Time's no more.

ODE

FOR THE INAUGURATION OF THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD'S MONUMENT, ST MARY'S LAKE.

Go, with a rainbow span the hills
  That bound the Ettrick and the Tweed,
And sing in joy ye mountain rills
  That tuned the Shepherd's reed;
And glory every woodland bower
In him, the undying "Forest Flower."

Come, shepherds! raise your manly heads—
  Your grey hill plaids and bonnets blue
May vie with robes of golden threads—
  For he was one of you;
While ploughmen share your joy by turns,
For you have Hogg, and they have Burns.

Come, forest maids! with light-blue eyes,
With rosy cheeks and golden hair,
And from your breasts let gentle sighs
Steal through the silent air,
In grateful love to him who wove
For you such thrilling lays of love.

Kilmeny floats amid the sky,
And whispers, "Many sisters here
Who, robed in virgin purity,
Left earth to many dear,
Shine pure and bright as the limpid leaven,
Or the stream of life that flows through heaven."

At morning's daw', when milking yowes;
At gloaming, "when the kye come hame;"
By yon green forest's hills and howes—
That Shepherd's honoured name
Shall deeply, warmly, be imprest
In every pure and gentle breast.

What were your patriots, peasants, lords,
Now blazed in Scotland's roll of fame,

Without the MAKER'S living words
Had given them deathless fame?
The Wallace who through time could carry,
But our Scotch Homer, dear Blind Harry?

And in yon gorgeous diadem,
That circled Mary's forehead fair,
By far the richest, brightest gem
A Shepherd planted there;
And still that pearl shines through the tears
That saddened all her after-years.

When Stewart sought the Stewart's crown,
What glories did young Charlie gain?
A nation's love! a world-renown!
And many a deathless strain.
Oh! who among our tuneful train
Such songs as Hogg's may sing again?

Borne by her elves, the fairy queen
To-night will come to Mary's glen:
Behold them radiant 'mid yon sheen
That crowns old Ettrick Pen.
They're welding gems from sunbeams now,
To sparkle round their Poet's brow.

The Witch of Fife may wing the wind
  The Carlisle Bishop's wine to pree,
But here she'll linger long behind
  Her Minstrel's form to see:
And her first jolly waught will be
To Hogg's immortal memory.

Come, Scotland, come, from muir and dale,
  From heathy hill and birken shaw,
And see in green Saint Mary's Vale
  A sight will charm ye a'—
The Shepherd, as he lived and moved
Amid the scenes he sung and loved.

Oh! blessings on that graceful fane,
  The offering of a nation's heart,
The offspring of a poet's brain,
  A gem of native art.
While towers the rock, while rolls the river,
Sculptor and Bard shall live for ever!

SONG FOR THE CENTENARY OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

SUNG AT THE EDINBURGH BANQUET.

Come let us raise a grateful song
On this our Minstrel's natal day;
And all the world shall round us throng,
Heart-homage to his name to pay.
One hundred years have passed away
Since first awoke that watchful eye,
Whose sparkling glance and genial ray
Have kindled light that ne'er can die.
See his glory brightly shining,
Over palace, hall, and cot;
See the myriad nations twining
Laurel-wreaths round Walter Scott!

Immortal strains of Auld Lang Syne
Are floating on the ambient air,
While Fame and Time strew flowers divine,
Around the Wizard Minstrel's chair,

Who in his hundredth year sits there
With songs and stories as of yore ;
Still charming all the brave and fair,
Still linking hearts for evermore.
See his glory brightly shining,
Over palace, hall, and cot ;
See the myriad nations twining
Laurel-wreaths round Walter Scott!

Statesmen and warriors gather round,
And prince and peasant swell the train ;
The sky-cleft hills, the glens profound,
Prolong the universal strain.
O'er all the world the loud refrain
Of grateful joy spreads wide and far ;
And Scotland's radiance ne'er can wane,
Illumed by such a lustrous star.
See his glory brightly shining,
Over palace, hall, and cot ;
See the myriad nations twining
Laurel-wreaths round Walter Scott!

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